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The Development of Primary Teacher Education in an Urban Chinese Community

by

© Wing-Chung CHENG

A THESIS

SUBMITTED TO THE FACULTY OF GRADUATE STUDIES AND RESEARCH

IN PARTIAL FULFILMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE DEGREE

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IN

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Date.....July 14, 1986.....

Abstract

The treatise is an intensive study of the qualitative aspects of two primary schools and one normal school in an urban Chinese community. The areas investigated include the organization of the schools, the curricula, the qualifications of teachers, and the modes of teacher-pupil interaction in the classroom. For the study of the normal school, the academic background of the students is also included. Research evidence generated through ethnographic techniques from Harbin, Heilongjiang Province, China, tends to indicate that the schools in that city might probably be located somewhere between Stages II and III of the Beeby model.

Beeby in his book *The Quality of Education in Developing Countries* asserted that the quality of primary education in most countries follows an evolutionary process of development, from Stage I to Stage IV. At the highest stage of educational development, schooling becomes learner-centred, i.e. meaning and understanding of symbols is greatly stressed. It is obvious that the Chinese schools studied in this thesis have not reached that final stage of development.

The other important point that Beeby made is that the teacher is a key agent in promoting educational change. Because of the prolonged general education and training which the teacher receives, the knowledge gap between the teacher and the pupils widens and as a result, the teacher

becomes not only competent but also confident in employing a more lively approach to teaching which encourages self-directed discipline as well as interest. In the case of Harbin, teaching and learning characteristics seen in the the primary schools tend to suggest that the general academic qualifications of the prospective teachers have been improving. Also there are striking similarities between the mode of classroom interaction in the normal school and that in the primary schools suggesting that there is some congruence between quality improvements in primary teacher education and in the work of the primary schools.

In addition, the research has also yielded information about some of the important socio-cultural characteristics of the primary teacher. For example, despite their low salaries and tough working conditions, primary teachers in Harbin are dedicated, enduring, and self-sacrificing individuals.

To conclude, it is suggested that in an economically less developed society like Harbin today where education is only moderately developed, it is unrealistic to insist that, as in the economically more developed countries, primary teachers must be university-trained graduates. The country simply cannot afford the cost that would be involved in achieving such a goal. Neither does it now have the educated or qualified manpower which would allow it to take such a step in the near future. But this is not to imply that qualitative improvements cannot take place in the

educational system. In fact there are certain socio-cultural characteristics among teachers which compensate for their lack of formal qualifications: Their dedication to their job for example and their active support of the government's modernization program are indoubtedly very positive factors in the total situation. Despite the devotion to duty and the hard work that is being done by the teachers, a concurrent and sustained effort has to be made to improve their economic status if progress is to be maintained.

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1. The Problem

A Day in a Grade Three Class

At eight, the school bell rang. Slowly the teacher rose and glanced at the whole class. Then she said, "Now lessons begin. Put away your other things." A voice cried out again, "Stand up." The whole class stood up and said, "How are you, teacher?" "How are you, class? Be seated," responded the teacher.

She began this double-period Chinese language class by asking, "Do you have any problems regarding the lesson yesterday?" Seeing that nobody put up a hand, she continued, "Have you prepared at home for today's lesson? I have told you before that when you have problems you should look up the dictionary first. You have learnt how to use the dictionary, haven't you? If you have any quesion, put up your hand now."

....

A Day in a Normal School Class

The lesson began with the same classroom rituals that were observed in the primary school, ... The teacher started by asking, "Do you still remember what we learnt last time?" No response. She ordered them to open the book and turn to a page. She read a short paragraph which described the characteristics of good memory. She then explicated word by word, sentence by sentence. When she was finished, she asked some short questions. Unlike the primary school lesson, very few students volunteered to answer. At the same time, she referred them to a certain passage in the page for the answer. After she named students to answer, she summarized the lesson so far by putting down on the blackboard the main points one by one. Her handwriting was very neat.

When she returned to the book, she read a paragraph related to the characteristics of the memory of school children. "Therefore, your teaching must be stimulating, so that the objectives of teaching will be fulfilled." she said without looking at the book (Excerpts from pages 98-9 and 145-6 below).

One starts with the assumption that improvement in education and training of teachers in China is a key factor in the overall development in the country. In fact teacher education in China today is designated as the 'machine tool'

of the four modernizations, namely, agriculture, industry, science and technology, and national defence. Subsequently, it has been singled out for special mention in the government's working plan and it was noted that "we must make great efforts to train primary and secondary school teachers, help them improve the teaching standard..."(*Beijing Review* July 4, 1983:xvi). This, from the Chinese leaders' viewpoint, will logically lead to an improvement in the quality of primary and secondary education which is regarded as the foundation of the nation's technological and economic development.

This concept of educational development and modernization in China seems to have been the brainchild of the post-Mao leadership which is taking an approach to modernization which lays tremendous emphasis on the development of science and technology. Vice-Premier Deng Xiao-ping, the chief architect of the four moderinizations, has indeed contended that the development of science and technology depends on education for the supply of talented personnel. Deng (1977; 1978) also said that to develop a sound education system, there must be a supply of qualified teachers. Therefore, teacher education must be developed too. It is in this sense that teacher education is the 'machine tool'.

There are, however, two particular reasons why there is concern with the quality of teachers in the country today. As evidence (*Beijing Review*, July 4, 1983: ii-xxiv; ibid,

July 11, 1983:4-5; ibid, June 10, 1985:15) suggests, the present Chinese leadership takes a manpower planning approach to improving the contribution of education to development. On this point Deng (1977: 45-46) has argued,

> To achieve modernization, the key is to develop science and technology. To develop science and technology, it is necessary to develop education. Modernization will not be achieved by empty talk. It requires knowledge and talent. If not, how can there be development? ... . Compared to developed countries, our country today has lagged behind for twenty years in science and technology. The United States has a total of 1.2 million technological personnel; the Soviet Union has 900 thousand. We only have 200 thousand among whom many are invalids. Not many of them are competent. Japan, starting from the Meiji Restoration, has realized the importance of developing science and technology, and education. The Meiji Restoration was a modernization by the bourgeoisie. Ours is a socialist modernization, therefore, we should be able to do better.
>
> To develop science and technology education must be developed, from primary education right to middle school and university education. ... .

This, according to the Chinese leadership, would necessitate a constant supply of capable teachers to educate the

hundreds of thousands of individuals who would eventually be needed to meet the manpower requirement of economic and educational expansion. In other words, the Chinese leadership regards the quality of the teacher as a pivotal point between education and economic development.

Secondly, with the end of the Cultural Revolution and the purge of the radicals in political circles, concerned educators at all levels are laying the blame for the low quality of education on the educational policies of the previous regime. The 'politics takes command' policies are said to have sacrificed academic standards for radical ideological education, thus lowering the quality of education that had taken China 17 years to attain. As the saying goes, "during the Cultural Revolution university education was of secondary school standard, secondary education primary school standard" (*Almanac of China's Education*, 1984:83). Apart from the political interference, this was also a direct result of the low quality of teachers at that time.' Now, a more academic oriented educational program is being demanded by the leadership and this calls

---

' Before the Cultural Revolution, China had not been able to staff its primary and middle schools with trained teachers exclusively. However, the foundation of an expansive system of teacher education had been established. In the name of educational revolution, the radicals demolished such a system. Consequently, training of primary and secondary teachers was suspended from 1966 to 1971. Although teacher training was resumed after 1972, the previous system was not reinstated until 1977. From 1972 to 1977, the length of training was greatly curtailed, and enrollment was based on political instead of academic requirements. Accordingly, given the educational expansion during the Cultural Revolution, a large number of untrained or lowly educated individuals were recruited as teachers.

for better trained teachers to staff its schools.

As far as primary teacher education in China is concerned, the situation has begun to change since 1976 and the normal school which is the sole institution for the training of primary and kindergarten teachers has been fully reinstated. In comparison with developments during the Cultural Revolution, when political correctness superseded expertise in every aspect of education, the present primary teacher education system puts greater emphasis on equipping prospective teachers with academic knowledge and professional skills. Consequently, candidates for training are expected to meet two minimum requirements -- completion of a junior middle school education and success at an entrance examination in the academic subjects. Moreover, the training period has been extended from three to four years since 1981.[3]

At the same time, there have been great efforts to improve the physical condition and facilities of the normal school. For example, the annual expenditure per capita on the normal school student increased from 29 yuan (two yuan equal approximately one Canadian dollar) in 1977 to 55 yuan in 1980 (*Almanac of China's Education*, 1984: 99). In 1983,

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[3] In 1952, a three-year program of normal school education was institutionalized. Given the uneven economic and educational development throughout the country, this three-year program of primary teacher education was to be implemented in big cities while a simplified two-year curriculum was implemented in smaller cities and towns. Today, the one-year difference still exists; normal schools in big cities adopt a four-year curriculum while those in counties and towns adopt a three-year curriculum.

there were 861 normal schools throughout China. In these normal schools were enrolled 455,000 prospective teachers (*Almanac of China*, 1984: 488-489). As a traditional practice, normal school students receive a stipend and free medical service during their period of training (Gu, 1981:247)

The curriculum of the normal schools is divided into five major fields of studies. These are: 1) political studies; 2) general cultural studies; 3) educational theory (including pedagogy and psychology); 4) teaching methods; and 5) teaching practice (Ibid).

Generally speaking, the curriculum reflects the present Chinese government's concern with promoting the professional standard of primary teachers. On the other hand, this subject-knowledge oriented curriculum is a rebuttal of the ideologically oriented curriculum which was implemented during the Cultural Revolution. The previous approach applied Mao's epithet -- "to be a good teacher, one must first be a good pupil" -- to teacher education in an inordinate manner. Mao's idea was to expound an important characteristic of the human being who, socially speaking, was both a learner and teacher. If properly translated into policy, it should promote integration of school and society because there would be a constant flow of practical knolwedge into the classroom by people with practical experience, thus, breaking down the 'ivory-tower' nature of the academic institution. The radical communists in China had not headed

in the right direction, despite their frequent use of Mao's rhetoric. It remains to be seen if the present leadership will be able to capitalize on Mao's development-oriented ideas of education. The implication of Mao's ideas on teacher education will be discussed in detail in Chapter 2.

The above gives a brief idea of the general thinking which has occurred more recently in primary teacher education in China. But information about what is actually happening in the normal schools has been very difficult to acquire, and this is one of the facts which prompted this study.

Over the past 36 years, little specific research has been conducted on primary teacher education in China and much of this has been conducted by external observers of Chinese educational development. Among them are H.E.Chen's(1960) *Teacher Education in Communist China*, Glassman's(1979) "The political experience of primary school teachers", S.C.Hu's(1972) *Education in the People's Republic of China 1949--1971: Focus on the Teaching Profession*, Jackson and Hayhoe's (1979) "The changing role of teachers in China", Liu's(1971) "Teacher training in the Cultural Revolution", Sieh's(1971) "The school teacher -- notes on professional tension in the education system", and Tucker's(1981) "Teacher education policy in contemporary China: the socio-political context".

Based on these studies, only a schematic picture of the administration and curriculum of primary teacher education

in China can be drawn because, except for H.E.Chen's(1960) and S.C. Hu's(1972) studies which provide a fairly detailed description of the primary teacher education system before 1970, the others include primary teacher education only as a part in their general discussion on the relationship between politics and teacher education. Therefore, there is little understanding of what changes have taken place within the field of primary teacher education in China over the past 36 years, in particular the academic and professional training of prospective teachers. Moreover, most of these studies are impressionistic and anecdotal.

Glassman's(1979) and Jackson and Hayhoe's (1979) studies, however, are theoretically oriented. Glassman's effort concentrates on establishing the relationship between government's emphasis on education and the political influence of primary teachers on education. In other words, it focuses on the ability of primary teachers in China to pursue their political interests under different political situations. But little is mentioned about the quality of primary teachers. Jackson and Hayhoe's work represents an attempt to sketch, very briefly, the different profiles of the teachers in China at different stages of political development. Yet, no indication of the future development of primary teacher education can be found.

To sum up, research in the area of teacher education in a heavily populated country like China has for a long time been neglected. The limited bits of research that have been

done do not attempt to provide an understanding of the relationship between the nature and dynamics of the program of primary teacher education and the particular socio-cultural fabric of Chinese society. This study begins research into this area by examining the qualitative aspect of the system of primary teacher education in China[3] today in terms of the general and professional background of the primary teacher (in-service and in-training) as well as that of the teacher educator, the nature of the training program, and, most importantly, the pattern of teacher-student interaction in the classroom. In other words, the research is concerned with:

1. Who are the primary teachers, primary teacher educators and prospective primary teachers in China today?
2. What kind of curriculum is taught to the prospective teachers in the normal schools today?
3. What kind of training did the primary teacher have in the early years of the regime?
4. Moreover, how do teachers in primary and normal schools teach today?

It is hoped that this research will enable those concerned with teacher education to assess systematically what development has taken place in primary teacher education in China over the past 36 years, and thus be in a better position to evaluate the overall strategy of

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[3]As far as field work is concerned, Harbin, the capital city of Heilongjiang Province, was chosen as the spot of study. The reasons why this research is confined to a particular urban Chinese community will be explained in Chapter 4.

educational development in China. This study of the relationship between teacher education and the educational and national development might also be of use to educators looking at this topic in other developing and even developed countries.

2. Primary Schools and Teacher Education in China

This research on the qualitative aspect of primary teacher education in today's China begins with 1) a review of the relationship between education and social change in China in the last hundred years; and 2) a review of the development of primary and primary teacher education in China after 1949. These reviews will provide some useful background information to this study.

2.1 Education and Social Change in China Since the Late Qing Dynasty (1644-1911)

The search for a model of national development in modern China was accompanied by a search for a model of schooling (D.Y.Chen, 1976; Sun, 1971). After a series of defeats by western powers in 1840, the Chinese slowly, though very reluctantly, began to acknowledge the technological superiority of the West which might have partly been the outcome of their educational system. The point was made by Li Hung-chang, a high-ranking statesman in advocating limited westernization to strengthen China in the mid-nineteenth century. He argued,

> The Westerners particularly rely upon the excellence and efficacy of their guns, cannon, and steamships, and so they can overrun China. The bow and spear, small guns, and native-made cannon which have hitherto been used by China cannot resist their rifles, which have their bullets fed from the

> rear opening. The sailing boats, rowboats, and the gunboats which have been hitherto employed cannot oppose their steam-engined warships. Therefore, we are controlled by the Westerners.
>
> To live today and still say "reject the barbarians" and "drive them out of our territory" is certainly superficial and absurd talk. Even though we wish to preserve the peace and to protect our territory, we cannot preserve and protect them unless we have the right weapons. They are daily producing their weapons to strive with us for supremacy and victory, pitting their superior techniques against our inadequacies, to wrangle with and to affront us. Then how can we get along for one day without weapons and techniques? (*The China Reader, No.1: 237-238*).

As a result, in 1860 the Imperial government agreed to the launching of the "Self-strengthening Movement" which chiefly aimed at promoting the western learning in an effort to learn about western technologies. This included knowledge about the manufacturing of armoured steamships, cannons and guns since the imperial bureaucrats thought that China was defeated largely because it lacked the modern instruments of war. In other words, the practical value of scientific ideas which modern western educational systems tried to encourage was still not recognized as important in China because Confucian education which, as Weber (1948:239) pointed out,

emphasized the ritualist and ethical character was unchallenged. This movement resulted in the learning and development of various kinds of modern technologies in China, for example, ship-making, railroad, telegraph, mining, and naval science, etc. It is easy to see that all these were geared to the development of the military strength of China. Consequently, various institutes of technological and western studies were established. Among them was Tongwen Guan -- the Academy of Foreign Languages. The purpose of this academy was to train new scholar-officials who would become acquainted with Confucian teachings, but would also acquire mastery of a foreign language. This would better equip them in the field of diplomacy to serve Chinese interests. However, other aspects of Chinese society were to be preserved from foreign influence because what the Chinese government wanted was "the creation of new policies that could ward off ... foreign threats and yet preserve the Confucian society and its ideology" (*The Chinese Reader*, No.1: 205).

Although all these institutes of western learning remained, the dream of China's self-strengthening movement was shattered when China was defeated by Japan in a war in 1896. Wright(1967:235), a historian, argued that the movement failed because the requirement of a modern state proved to run directly counter to the requirements of the Confucian order. The result was that traditional Confucian scholar-officials did not want to see China westernized

politically and culturally.

The measures of reform undertaken in the Self-strengthening Movement were recognized by a group of more ambitious Confucian reformers as inadequate to serve even the limited aim in view, namely, to import and integrate into Chinese society western technologies without any social and political reorganization. Supported by the young Emperor, Kuang-hsu, this group of reformers under the leadership of Kang You-wei initiated a sweeping modernization campaign in 1898. The policies ranged from industrial and agricultural reforms to the reorganization of the administrative bureaucracy. Western learning was not to be confined to the learning of science and foreign languages but was also to include other social, economic and political theories. This was the ill-fated Hundred Days Reform -- so called because it lasted only one hundred days.

Under the auspices of the Emperor's mother, the Empress Dowager, the conservatives who hated to see the erosion of Confucian principles by western learning and felt their interests threatened by it, united to sabotage the reform. Consequently, some of the reformers were executed, some fled to Japan and the second attempt of China's modernization came to a sudden end.

The two reforms, namely the Self-strengthening Movement and the Hundred Days Reform, could not save the Imperial rule from collapse. However, it was around this time that modern education began to take shape and spread in China

(Borthwick, 1983). For example, four years after the Hundred Days Reform, a comprehensive revision of the education system was started. This included the establishment of a modern university in the nation's capital -- Beijing (or Peking), and a plan for the development of secondary and primary schools in every province. Moreover, teacher education also began to develop and to be institutionalized in China in 1902, with the setting up of an academy of teacher education at the nation's Capital University (*History of the Beijing Normal University*).

Formal education in China first occured more than two thousand years ago, but there was never any sort of teacher education because teaching was regarded as an activity which could be spontaneously performed by any one who was educated. In 1897, as a ripple effect of the Self-strengthening Movement, teacher education was first carried out in a private school in Shanghai which was set up by returned foreign-trained scholars (Sun, 1971:515) and five years later, with the institutionalization of teacher training at Capital University, the groundwork of a modern teacher education system in China was laid. The teacher training program which was developed aimed at training a new type of teacher for the modern schools. The long term plan, however, was for the establishment of a college of teacher education (the equivalent of the Academy of Teacher Education at Capital University) in every province and a teacher training school in every county (Ibid).

The effect of education on social change in the Qing (or Ching) Dynasty cannot be assessed because the dynastic government was overthrown a few years after the new education system had been implemented.

In 1911 under the leadership of Dr. Sun Yat-sun, the first republican government in China was set up. Ever since then, despite the chaotic political situation caused by warlords, education in China has become more and more westernized (D.Y.Chen,1976; Lutz,1971; Sun,1971). An educational structure based mainly on the Japanese and American models began to take shape and in line with western concepts of schooling, the curriculum at that time included many modern subjects. The importance of teacher education was also recognized, and became more systematized. Education became increasingly more popular, and by 1945 it was reported that 76 percent of the age cohort in some better-off provinces and cities were attending primary school (Sun,1971:263).

Despite this fact there was insufficient evidence to conclude that education had brought about significant social and economic changes in Chinese society from 1911 to 1949. This was partly due to the unstable social and political situation caused by the Japanese invasion since 1931 and the civil war (1945-1949) with its resulting fluctuations in the society as a whole. Without a stable social environment, the potential contribution of education to social and economic development was largely lost. Education can prove to be an

important factor in social change and development especially in a society where there is some dynamic stability which evinces steady and progressive movement towards its desired goals.

On the other hand, as Rozman (1981: 458-459) pointed out,

> China had the extraordinary foundation of respect for learning, initially high premodern rates of literacy, and a presumption of objective competition to advance those who achieved superior performance. The first half of the twentieth century witnessed a reorientation in the content of learning, substantially increasing its relevance for modernization. Despite the still limited impact of the new learning on the majority of the polulation and on production, at mid-century there were probably few countries among those not modernized that could match China's population in being accustomed to the development, transmission, and implementation of an ordered body of knowledge and techniques.

To conclude, the Chinese government, from the second half of the nineteenth century onwards, realized the importance of modern education for national development. However, owing to the lack of stable social and economic growth, China was not able to accomplish her national transformation with the aid of education which was itself undergoing a

process of reorganization.

This situation changed drastically after 1949 when China, under the rule of the Chinese Communist Party, was freed from foreign intervention and her economy began to flourish. As a result, over the last 36 years China has made substantial progress both in terms of its education and its economy. But this by no means implies that educational and economic development have proceeded smoothly. As the evidence suggests, setbacks have been experienced in both realms. The following is an account of the problems China has experienced in the development of primary education and primary teacher education since 1949. This serves as an immediate introduction to the background of the research problem of this study -- the development of primary teacher education in a particular urban Chinese community after 1949. It also attempts to throw light on the problems which face China if it wants to improve its quality of primary education and primary teacher education.

2.2 The Development of Primary Education in China since 1949

2.2.1 The System

As regards primary education in China after 1949, there have been two dominant factors affecting its development -- the lack of funds and the conflict over the definition of Marxism. First of all, the shortage of funds has necessitated the Chinese leaders to look for alternative

approaches in its efforts to expand primary education.

Since the establishment of the new regime, the Chinese government has attempted to introduce alternative ways of financing primary education, hoping that people will also play their part in the national effort to universalize primary education. As a result, primary schools in China have been reorganized into the state-run and people-run schools depending on how they are funded. The state-run schools receive their funding from the central or provincial government. Usually, these schools are relatively better equipped and situated in cities.[4] For the people-run schools, while they also receive some financial support from the government, a greater part of their expenditure is either met by local organizations such as the factories, or generated by the schools themselves in productive labour. Although great differences exist among state-run schools, it is the people-run schools which have suffered most from the chronic shortage of funds and qualified teaching personnel in the past 36 years.

Another attempt at universalizing primary education has been to reduce the number of years of primary education. As early as 1951, the Chinese government initiated a plan to shorten the primary education cycle from six to five years. It was hoped that the new five-year system would accelerate

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[4] It must be pointed out, however, that compared to their counterparts in western societies, primary schools in China are barely equipped. For example, the average cost per annum of primary education was not more than 20 yuan (approximately $10 Canadian) per pupil before 1979 (*Almanac of China's Education 1984:* 99).

the achievement of universal education in China. But the goal did not prove to be so easy to reach -- for inadequate preparation of teachers and insufficient supply of teaching materials were major obstacles that had to be overcome.

The biggest interruption of education in China, however, has come from the dominant development ideology of the country. During the 36 years since the Revolution, the government has assigned to education two explicit tasks in the plan of nation-building. These were first stated in Article 41 of the provisional constitution of 1949 when Chinese communists set up a formal system of government:

> The culture and education of the People's Republic of China are new and democratic, that is, national, scientific, and popular. The main tasks in raising the cultural level of the people are: training personnel for national construction work; liquidation of feudal, comprador, and fascist ideology; and developing an ideology of service to the people (Cited in Ridley et al,1973:25).

In other words, the Chinese government looks upon education a) as a means of training people to be more productive in the nation's economic development efforts, and b) to transform people's outlook in life so that they are oriented towards socialist construction that is based on a new political philosophy which is quite dissonant with the traditional culture (Bastid, 1970; H.E.Chen, 1962; Glassman, 1977; C.T.Hu, 1974(a); Kwong, 1979; Lofstedt, 1980; Orleans,

1960; Price, 1979; Ridley et al, 1971; Solomon, 1971; Tsang, 1968).

It appears that the Chinese leaders generally agree upon these two major purposes of education, but they are sometimes divided among themselves politically over the kind of education which would best achieve these goals. This conflict over what is the most appropriate educational strategy from a Marxist perspective arises from the fact that, as Gouldner(1980) points out, there are two paradigms of Marxism which result in two different approaches to nation-building within the Marxist framework. First, there is the "critical Marxism" which emphasizes a "moral" or ideological reinvigoration in the transformation of society, and there is also the "scientific Marxism" emphasizing technical modernization.

If the point is stretched a bit, the paradigm of two-Marxisms will provide a helpful framework for understanding the conflict over the definition of Marxist education in China (W.C. Cheng, 1982). In short, Chinese communists advocating technical modernization uphold quality education and take an 'enlightened' approach to political indoctrination. But those supporting moral or ideological reinvigoration contend that education is to inculcate the zeal of revolution through an unreserved and dedicated political education program. Such a conflict was submerged until 1958 when the Great Leap Forward Movement(here after

referred to as GLF) was launched.[1]

In 1958, in order to coordinate with the general economic development policy of the GLF which was to realize socialism in China quickly and economically, a half-work half-study education system was developed. This system, as Barendsen(1964), Bastid(1970), and H.E.Chen(1981) have observed, resulted from economic necessity and ideological idealism in China's educational reform. With pupils and teachers engaging in productive labour, it was obvious that schools needed less government subsidies and could enroll more pupils. Through this strategy it was hoped that universal primary education would be achieved in a shorter period of time. More importantly, Mao and his supporters asserted that, by participating at an early age in production, primary pupils should start acquiring the habit and political meaning of physical labour which was the identifying character of the working class and peasants who made up 80 percent of the total population in China. Thus, the zeal of revolution would be sustained through education. Owing to changes in leadership, the half-work half-study system was abolished after 1960 but revived with a greater

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[1]Agitated by the impressive success during the First Five Year Plan, Mao, as well as other communist leaders, were fascinated with the idea that if the immense potential labour was sufficiently mobilized, China would be transformed from a backward into a modern nation in a few years. Consequently, in 1958 there was the Great Leap Forward Movement which aimed at over-all social, economic, and political leap-forward. For details, see Hinton, H. (ed.), *The People's Republic of China 1949-1979: A documentary survey*. Wilminton, Delware: Scholarly Resources, 1980.

pace of development during the Cultural Revolution.'

In the years other than those of the GLF and the Cultural Revolution, the role of education in China was viewed from a different perspective -- to disseminate scientific-technological knowledge systematically. As regards primary education, it was then argued that the major task of the school was to teach basic knowledge to the pupils. Where physical labour, which was to acculturate pupils to the habit of hard work, was introduced, it was not to be excessive, i.e. it was not to distract learning at least among the pupils attending the whole-day schools.

Also, to further promote academic standards in the primary schools, it was insisted that some 'key-point' primary schools should be set up. With better teachers and students and more resources for experimenting with new educational ideas, these 'key-point' primary schools in which the pupils were reported to have been more successful in examinations, were looked upon to fulfill the urgent tasks of supplying junior middle schools with students of

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'Since 1949, primary education in China has consisted of two types of school; the whole-day school and the non whole-day school. While the whole-day school is a leading edge to guarantee the quality of education, the non whole-day school has resulted from the practical need to rapid popularization of education. This non whole-day system consists of half-day, alternate-day, and spare-time schools for which the standard curriculum is modified to suit their needs. For example, in the half-day school, pupils have lessons for half day and go out to help in the agricultural production for the other half. It is also called the half-work half-study school. During the Cultural Revolution, primary education inherited the radical ideas from the half-work half-study system. Subsequently, physical labor and political education were to be upheld as the aim of education even in the whole-day school at that time.

higher academic quality and disseminating the knowledge of advanced teaching methods to other primary schools (Leng,1983:33). This was another approach to primary education which was derived from a different conception of how best to develop education in a communist country like China. But those who submitted to this idea of education were attacked as 'capitalist roaders' during the Cultural Revolution (*Chronology of the two-road struggle on the educational front in the past 17 years*).

2.2.2 The Curriculum

The curriculum of primary education in China before 1958 was, by and large, similar to that in other countries. It included such academic subjects as the Chinese language, arithmetic, nature study, history, geography, physical education, music, and art, etc. (H.E. Chen, 1962; Price, 1979; World Survey of Education II, 1958). On the whole, the curriculum stressed the practical function of the subjects, namely, language ability and life skills. It should also be noted that the teaching of communism and the struggle and success of the Chinese Communist Party were taught in year six (*Almanac of China's Education 1984: 132-137*).

As pointed out before, the divergent approaches to national development have had great impact on the development of the primary education system. Dictated by the ideologically oriented approach to socialist construction, a politically dominated version of school curriculum emerged

in 1958 and was implemented to a greater extent during the Cultural Revolution. This politically-oriented curriculum greatly reduced the importance of academic learning in primary schools. As pointed out in the previous discussion, the dominant theme of education during the GLF was to cultivate political consciousness through productive labour. 'Bases of Agriculture' and 'Manual Labour', which meant doing labour work in the field or factory, were included as two independent subjects in the primary school curriculum (H.E.Chen, 1962; Klepikov, 1960). Further, during the Cultural Revolution, an overwhelming majority of class teaching was devoted to the study of the thought of Mao Zedong. This politics-laden curriculum has given way, since Mao's death, to a 'back to the basics' curriculum which is similar to the pre-1958 version.

2.2.3 Recent Developments

With the fall of the Gang of Four, and after the Cultural Revolution was officially ended in 1976, the Chinese government introduced a series of changes concerning economics, politics, cultures, as well as education (Kaplan et al, 1979). On the whole, they represent a back-down from the radical ('let-politics-lead') policies advocated in Mao's time. Primary education is an example in point. In 1979, the Chinese government drafted the "Elementary School Students Regulations" which included 10 moral and political codes to be observed in the primary schools (*Encyclopedia of*

Education, 1980:30). In other words, moral/political codes in education are still explicitly practised in China today. On the other hand, stress was placed on the improvement of the academic quality of education, in cities as well as rural areas. As Collins(1981), C.T. Hu(1981), Pepper(1980), Shirk(1979), Smith(1982), and Zachariah(1979) have indicated, education in China has gone back to basic studies which, in the view of the government, is one of the first steps to realize the four modernizations.

Consequently, much effort has been put into building and better furnishing the primary schools, on training and retraining more qualified teachers, on developing standard teaching materials. For example, educational expenditure increased from 9.95 per cent of the government expenditure in 1979 to 13.3 per cent in 1981. In the first 33 years of the new regime (from 1950 to 1983), the country had spent on education a total of 135 billion yuan. But 9.5 per cent (12.7 billion) of it was expended in 1983 alone (*China's Great Achievements, vol. 2:* 410).

The most outstanding attempt, however, is the re-development of the key-point primary schools, which were ardently attacked during the Cultural Revolution as the 'little treasure pagodas'. With the approval of the State Council, the Ministry of Education adopted in January 1978 a plan to develop these schools. The rationale for running them is best understood from a Chinese educator's words:

The ... plan stresses the urgent need to raise and

> train a large number of talented people ... to build China into a great and powerful socialist modern country. To fulfill this purpose we must start with education and make a conscious effort to run effectively a number of key elementary and secondary schools so that we can sum up the experience, improve the educational quality, and train students of high quality ... (Zhong, 1981:31).

Seeing that China is lacking in economic resources and qualified personnel on the one hand, and recognizing the urgent need for students of high academic standard, the Chinese leaders today want to develop the key-point school as the leading edge in this direction. In other words, from the viewpoint of the Chinese leadership, to name and develop a few key-point schools in every city in the short run at least is inevitable if the quality of primary school education is to be improved so as to meet the requirement of producing sufficient qualified technological personnnel at a moment when the government is restructuring the whole social system. Also these key-point schools are looked upon to provide the experience, if not the model, for educational development in the next decade. Therefore, all key-point schools serve the purpose of "experimental" schools in the broadest sense of the word. In fact they complement the experimentation with the new economic ideas which is taking place today. As an assistant headmistress whom I interviewed

at a key-point school in Harbin explained,

> A job of our school is to diffuse our teaching experience to other primary schools in the city or across the province. We arrange teachers from other schools to observe classes here. We prepare reports and introduce our experience of reform in educational conferences. Also, we are looked upon to produce graduates who can have what Chairman Mao called all-round development. They would be intellectually, physically, and morally fit. Our society needs knowledgeable people who have not only an active and analytic mind but also a strong body. That is our goal. We join in the task of cultivating talents for the country (Field notes).

The likely adverse effects which the key-point schools could have on China's development as a socialist society deserves further research. However, some foreign writers on Chinese education seem to have overreacted to the restoration of this key-point school system.[1] They have been fascinated by the rhetoric of the Maoist model of education developed during the Cultural Revolution which denounced individual academic excellence as personal achievement needs or as "being detached from the people". As a result, the key-point school system is regarded as drifting away from Mao's educational ideal -- education for a classless

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[1]For some initial discussion, see H.E.Chen,1981; Gardner and Idema, 1973, Lofstedt,1980; Pepper,1978; Price,1979; Shirk,1979; Zachariah,1979.

society.

Given the uneven economic development in China, the quality of schooling also varies and this seems to reflect the differing levels of economic development in the country. The difference between the key-point school and non key-point school is therefore only secondary as compared to the difference between schools in one area and another resulting from different levels of economic development. As will be pointed out later, the general conditions of the key-point schools are rather meager. More importantly, it is the government's regulation that all primary schools have to enroll children in the locality without entrance examination. That should be regarded as a first step to equality of educational opportunity in the Chinese context.

It should also be pointed out that, by the end of 1979, there were more than 7000 key-point primary schools enrolling 5.1 million pupils in China and they then made up about 3.5 per cent of the total primary school population in the country (*Almanac of China*, 1984: 485).

2.2.4 Summary

When the People's Republic of China was established in 1949, China was a country with a huge population of whom over 80 percent were illiterate (*Encyclopedia of Education*, 1980:1), and education was a privilege of the rich. With regard to primary education, Chinese communists have taken up the responsibility of teaching people to read

and write; they have attempted to expand the education system to achieve universal primary education in as short a time as possible. But there have been financial and political obstacles to the achievement of this goal. Yet, the illiteracy rate in China dropped to 52.4 percent in 1964 and it was down to less than 40 percent by 1982 (*Beijing Review*, April 2, 1984: 22).

Today, primary education is still not free but schools enroll 94 percent of the age group even though not every pupil will complete primary education. More importantly, not every primary school is as well equipped as it should be, and the qualification of teachers are still low. Nevertheless, the Chinese government has committed itself to tackling these problems and has directed much effort in this direction. It therefore remains an urgent task for the Chinese government as well as for educators to find out ways of improving the quality of the teachers, upgrading the learning facilities in the primary schools and reducing the inequality which it is sometimes felt could arise between the products of the key-point schools and non-key point schools.

2.3 The Development of Primary Teacher Education in China since 1949

2.3.1 The System

As in other developing countries, the standard of primary teacher education in China has remained unsatisfactory. Compared to industrialized societies, the general and professional qualification of the teacher is extremely low (H.E.Chen,1960; Glassman,1979; S.C.Hu,1972; Jackson and Hayhoe,1979; Price,1979; Tucker,1981). H.E.Chen(1960:11) took pains to point out,

> ... in talking about teacher training in ... China, it must be borne in mind that a high percentage of the teachers have had no professional training and that large number of teachers have not even had the minimum academic schooling needed for teaching their subjects, let alone professional training in normal schools.

Unfortunately, what Chen observed in 1960 is still true today. As reported in a 1983 World Bank study (*China: Socialist Economic Development*,Vol. III:149),

> Since 1949, 2.37 million teachers (or 44% of the current total) have graduated from primary teacher training colleges in China. This implies that the remaining 3.01 million teachers have had no pre-service pedagogical training except for the few teachers trained during the pre-war period.

The efforts to develop a systematic primary teacher education program in China can be divided into two stages. The first stage developed from 1952 to the beginning of the Cultural Revolution in 1966. It represented the government's first attempt to set up a professional, though relatively low-status, primary teacher training system throughout China. It was a three-year program of training at a senior middle school level. Therefore, junior middle school graduates (grade nine) were enrolled. The second stage, which is a revival of the first one, has developed after 1981 when the program of study was extended to four years and also represented an attempt to raise the professional quality of teachers in the primary schools.

During the Cultural Revolution, formal teacher education in China was unduly disregarded in the country, being overwhelmed by desire to stress political education. This, however, was a logical outcome from the radical viewpoint on education which was chiefly derived from Mao's ideas in this sphere.*

2.3.2 Mao and the Role of the Teacher

Mao was not only a politician but also a theorist, most concerned with political and educational issues. For him (Mao, 1971), the communist revolution was not simply a replacement of the feudalistic and capitalistic

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*The following section will concentrate on understanding the implications of Mao's ideas on teacher education. For a detailed discussion on Mao's view on education itself, see Kwong, 1979; Price, 1979.

politico-economic structures and practices by communistic ones. It was also a cultural revolution which set out to transform the ideology of the people to become communist in outlook. Consequently, Mao regarded as of foremost importance the work of the teacher who he saw as having had tremendous influence over the moral/political development of the young generation. In one of his major articles, "On the correct handling of contradictions among the people", Mao on the one hand assigned to the teacher (being a part of the intellectual class in China) the role of an ideological overseer, and on the other laid down the bed rock of political dominance over the teacher by the communist party. He (Mao, 1957a: 457-458) contended that

> China needs the services of as many intellectuals as possible for the colossal task of socialist construction. We should trust the intellectuals who are really willing to serve the cause of socialism, and should radically improve our relations with them and help them solve any problems requiring solution, so that they can give full play to their talents....
>
> The mass of intellectuals have made some progress, but they should not be complacent. They must continue to remould themselves, gradually shed their bourgeois world outlook and acquire the proletarian, communist world outlook so that they can fully fit in with the needs of the new society

> and unite with the workers and peasants. This change in world outlook is something fundamental, and up till now most of our intellectuals cannot be said to have accomplished it. We hope that they will continue to make progress and that, in the course of work and study, they will gradually acquire the communist world outlook, get a better grasp of Marxism-Leninism and become integrated with the workers and peasants....
>
> ... The ideological remoulding carried on in the past was necessary and yielded positive results. ... All departments and organizations should shoulder their responsibilities in ideological and political work. This applies to the Communist Party, the Youth League, government departments in charge of this work, and especially to heads of educational institutions and teachers.

According to Mao, the intellectuals were important to China's socialist construction, but they were to be educated politically by the proletariat before they were fully entrusted to perform this role. As far as the relationship between the teacher and the masses was concerned, Mao argued that the teacher should not alienate himself and feel superior to those he taught. Instead, he should learn from them. This was so because Mao believed that all knowledge initially came from life experience, and the meaning of education was to equip people with true knowledge so that

they would act upon the world for the well-being of the proletariat. In other words, the teacher's responsibility was to help the masses or students put book knowledge into practice which was cardinal to national development in a country like China. In "The speech at the Chinese Communist Party's national conference on propaganda work", Mao (1957b: 486) drove this point home.

> Until an intellectual's book knowledge is integrated with practice, it is not complete, and it may be very incomplete indeed. It is chiefly through reading books that intellectuals acquire the experience of our predecessors. Of course, it is necessary to read books, but by itself it does not solve problems. One must study the actual situation, examine practical experience and concrete material, and make friends with workers and peasants.

Who then was the teacher? Although Mao basically believed that good teachers were trained, he insisted that everyone could teach something to a certain extent in some way (Chu,1980:378). As a result, those who taught in a classroom by a certain schedule were teachers; those who helped others to learn anywhere outside the classroom without a definite schedule were also teachers. What counted was to contribute to the productive activities during the process of socialist construction; that was, in Mao's terminology, to serve the people.

In order to serve the people well, the teacher was required to get acquainted with and understand them. More importantly, he must also do manual work, thus integrating himself with the masses. Mao (1957b: 485) stated,

> To be a good teacher, one must first be a good pupil. There are many things which cannot be learned from books alone; one must learn from those engaged in production, from the workers, from the poor and lower middle peasants and, in schools, from the students, from those one teaches.

Mao's emphasis on experience in learning and his concept of the role of the teacher who, in short, was a practical-knowledge generator, affected the development of teacher education in China. For example, in the 1958 Great Leap Forward Movement and the Cultural Revolution when Mao dominated the Party leadership and forged without hesitation his plan of social change, he demanded that education be combined with production, and students and teachers be integrated with the masses. As a result, teachers, as well as students, were required to go to work either in the field or a factory. At the same time, schools were bringing in people with practical experience, mostly farmers and workers, to teach. Selection of prospective teachers was based on class background and their professional training was preoccupied with political and productive activities (H.E.Chen,1981; Liu,1971; Tucker,1981; Unger,1982). As Unger (1982:155) has observed, teacher education at that time was

generally simple; even middle school teachers were trained for half to one year.

On the other hand, Mao's view of the teacher can be regarded as a reaction to the classical Chinese image of the teacher who, following the Confucian tradition, saw his role as that of the master mind who should not be involved in ordinary productive activities.

Mao's politically dominated view of teacher education, however, has become history now in China because it is not in line with the prevailing thinking among the present leadership which argues that as China is going to become more and more industrialized and complex society, teacher training should be specialized and professional. The achievement of a higher stage of development in teacher education depends also on how well the government will be able to eliminate the three social barriers which affect individuals becoming teachers. These, as obseved by H.E.Chen (1960; cited in Price, 1979: 223), were, a) the low political status of teachers; b) their inadequate salaries and living conditions; and c) the fact that they were overworked which often led to nervous illnesses.

As regards systematic training of primary teachers, this task before 1966 was the responsibility of the junior normal schools and normal schools. As H.E.Chen(1960:13) has observed,

> The junior normal school takes pupils who have completed the high elementary (Grade Six) and

> others of equivalent standing and prepared them for teaching the first four grades of the elementary school. Its course is usually three years, sometimes four years, in length. It also offers short-term courses, ranging from six months to one or two years, to train graduates of the junior middle school for teaching the first four grades of the elementary school.

Besides the junior normal schools, primary teachers were also trained in regular normal schools which educated teachers for all grades of the primary school. Mostly, they were located in big cities. H.E.Chen(Ibid) again reported,

> (The normal school) admits pupils who have completed the junior middle school and others of equivalent standing for a course to be completed in three years. ... Students are admitted by entrance examination, but those recommended by their schools or by government offices may be exempted from the exam. ... Upon graduation, they are ordinarily required to teach for 3 years before they may change to a different occupation or continue study in a higher school... .

Of course, it is always easier to plan than to implement. The plan for teacher education was confronted with a number of problems before 1966. For example, how could these schools compete with ordinary secondary schools for better qualified candidates to undertake their training

programs? How could the candidates be effectively trained? More importantly, given the uneven development of education in China, how could the plan be rapidly extended to training institutions in rural areas?

The greatest hindrance, however, came from the radical change of policy which was a result of the political struggle in the country. Owing to the dominance of Mao's concept of the teacher's role, systematic primary teacher education came to a halt during the Cultural Revolution when the requirement of academic and professional training for teachers was regarded as a means of discriminating against the culturally deprived working people and their children. If this practice was to be continued, the revolution would, so it was argued, be undermined. Thus, it was demanded that teachers should learn from the working class, peasants, and soldiers to be of the politically correct disposition in the classroom.

Since the Cultural Revolution, there has been an increase of professionalism in teacher education (Gu,1981:247). Today, junior normal schools have been abolished and normal schools have become the sole institution for training primary school teachers. This guarantees that all prospective teachers in China would have at least completed junior middle school and, since 1981, the period of training has been generally extended to four years.

2.3.3 The Curriculum

The curriculum used in primary teacher education before 1966 concentrated on academic subjects such as language, mathematics and science, and up until 1960, the Soviet Union provided the model for the Chinese especially in terms of their curriculum organization and teaching methods that had been adopted in the training of teachers. Soviet educators were invited to give lectures and conduct forums on pedagogical problems in China and Chinese teachers went to the Soviet Union to learn from the more 'advanced' experience of the Soviet teachers (H.E.Chen, 1960:25).

Partly as a result of the influence of Soviet education the curriculum at that time was concerned with academic and professional training of the teacher, but such a curriclum was essentially discontinued during the Cultural Revolution. Nevertheless, the recent developments have suggested that an academic-professional oriented curriculum in China has emerged again in teacher education.

2.3.4 Summary

In retrospect, the unsatisfactory development of primary teacher education in China has been the result of a number of factors. As previous studies showed, most primary teachers in China are untrained. This has resulted from the rapid growth of primary education in China on the one hand, and disruption of formal teacher education program on the other.

Secondly, the on-going dispute over the definition of Marxist education has made steady progress in the professional training in teacher education impossible. In other words, there has been a lack of a consistent policy in this area. As a result, owing to the dominance of the Maoist concept of education prior to 1977, teacher training for some time emphasized overwhelmingly the political rather than the professional side of such preparation. Consequently, as H.E.Chen(1981) has observed, teachers in China were asked to devote more attention to productive labour and less to academic subjects, to relax standards or sequential mastery of a subject, and to favor ideological correctness over knowledge of content and pedagogical skills. With the more stable social, economic, and educational development today, it is expected that the above obstacles will disappear. Hence, a higher stage of professional development in the education of the teacher in China seems to have emerged.

But in what ways is the program of primary teacher education today different from that of the 1950's and the early 1960's? Also, given the higher academic qualification and more professional training of the prospective teachers today, will there be a shift towards problem-solving or student-centre education in the primary schools? Moreover, how developed is primary education in China compared to western societies? These are important questions for the understanding of the relationship between the new primary

teacher education program and the overall educational development in China.

3. The Theoretical Framework

Coleman's (1975) findings for the USA that teachers have little identifiable effect on student achievement has been invalidated as far as developing countries are concerned. Instead, it is generally established that teachers' professional training and teaching experience greatly affect students' learning (Avalos and Haddad,1981; Chang,1971; Dove,1982; Taylor, 1979; *Teacher Training and Student Achievements in Less Developed Countries;*). By the same token, it is further argued that teacher education has greater importance to nation-building in developing countries because the school is the major agency for inculcating modern skills and diffusing new knowledge (*Teacher Training and Student Achievement in Less Developed Countries*). How to improve teacher education in developing countries has remained a chronic problem.

In fact, there has been some research on the evaluation of teacher education in the Third World which has revealed a number of important educational problems. Insofar as works of general interest are concerned, the number is not impressive. Among them are those of Bacchus(1975), Hercik(1976), Husen(1979), Lewis(1970), Sheffield(1974), Thompson(1972), Thompson and Greenland (1983), and Turner(1978). Much has been contributed by these seminal works. Some of them, e.g. Bacchus(1975), Hercik (1976), Husen(1979), have pointed out that in terms of programs and program content developing countries should not copy without

modification the model of teacher education produced in the developed countries. Some others, e.g. Lewis(1970), Turner(1978), have observed that to improve the quality of teacher education, the quality of teaching personnel and supporting facilities must be improved. It has also been argued (Bacchus,1976; Thompson and Greenland, 1983) that teacher education will contribute to social development if the teacher is educated to function more effectively as an agent of change. Another work that merits closer attention is Beeby's(1966) *The Quality of Education in Developing Countries*, which attempts to provide a model to understand the development of primary education in economically less developed countries.

Before going on to a detailed discussion of the Beeby model, it will be useful to look at two other significant views of the role of the teacher. Unlike the Beeby model which relates the role of the teacher to no social institution other than education, these two views of the teacher's role analyse the attributes of the teacher in relation to the social structure. They are the functionalist and the Freirean views of the teacher's role.

3.1 The Functionalist View of the Teacher

The functionalist view of the teacher's role is, of course, derived from its interpretation of the role of schooling in society. Among others, Durkheim and Parsons (Durkheim, 1956; Parsons, 1961) are two important members of

this school of thought. In brief, the functionalist viewpoint of education holds that formal education in the industrialized society performs specific functions, namely, to socialize students to be committed to the broad social values of society, and to select and train the young to be technically efficient for different occupational roles. Both these functions, in the final analysis, are contributing to the pattern maintenance of society because, as Meighan (1981:212) notes, the child is now

> socialized to accept the legitimacy of a highly differentiated society in which individuals are selected for different roles which carry unequal status and reward, and also the acceptability of the criteria by which such selection is made.

Consequently, as Parsons (1961:445) notes, "The elementary school class (in the United States) is an embodiment of the fundamental American value of equality of opportunity, in that it places value both on initial equality and on differential achievement".

In regard to the teacher, it has been shown that the teacher's role is that of a director of learning and a mediator of middle-class culture (Kinney, 1953; Parsons, 1961; Spindler, 1959). He directs the learning process in the tranmission of knowledge. What is to be taught and how it is to be taught are the teacher's main stock in trade. Also, the teacher is expected to encourage in his students the development of allegiance to societal goals and values.

As Durkheim (1956:86) contended, "The ascendancy that teacher naturally has over his pupil, because of the superiority of his experience and his culture, will naturally give to his influence the efficacious force that he needs".

Accordingly, if the teacher is to be successful in these two roles of facilitating learning and moral education, he must dominate the classroom. Durkheim argued,

> The teacher must therefore be committed to presenting (the rule), not as his own personal doing, but as a moral power superior to him, and of which he is an instrument, not the author. He must make the student understand that it imposes itself on him as it does on them; that he cannot remove or modify it; that he is constrained to apply it; that it dominates him and obliges him as it obliges them" (Quoted in Meighan, 1981:209).

An important feature of this functionalist view of the teacher's role is that it demands a professional approach to teacher training which emphasizes studies of curriculum development, teaching methods, and knowledge concerning foundations of education like history, philosophy and psychology of education. Subsequently, the academic preparation of elementary teachers has been extended from high school to university level. Presumably, the teacher so trained can, with aid of advanced educational technology, function effectively in a scientifically and economically

developed society. All this seemingly matches what has been happening in teacher education in industrial societies.

If the functionalist view is taken as the exclusive approach to teacher education in developing countries, the consequence could be lamentable. As is implied in the functionalist concept of the teacher's role, the teacher is a partner of the state in passing on the values of society to the young generation. From this perspective and since, as Marx (1972:136) noted, "The ideas of the ruling class are in every epoch the ruling ideas..." the teacher could, instead of preparing the students to cope with changes in a developing society, be used by a minority in power to make others accept their values and ideology, thus maintaining the status quo to their own benefit. In other words, education could become a part of the mechanism used in an oppressive society to keep the dominant groups in power.

Moreover, in an economically less developed society which struggles to expand education, the teacher has to develop an awareness and capability to utilize the indigenous resources for educational as well as social development. In other words, with relatively limited resources, he has to attempt to develop a program of education for his pupils that is geared to the nation's level of economic resources and which still prepares his pupils to play an important role in social change and development. This, however, is ignored in the functionalist view of the teacher's role. To overcome these two weaknesses, we have to turn to another

model of the teacher.

3.2 The Freirean View of the Teacher

Although expounded in a philosophical manner, the educational ideas of Paulo Freire have great implications for those concerned with social change by educational reform because he himself has been involved in a similar kind of task in South America. More important is the fact that from his ideas about education and the teacher's role a strategy for social change can be developed.

To begin with, Freire makes his thesis explicit -- that social revolution in a developing country can be achieved without violence and through education. But for it to do this the nature of education also has to be changed entirely. According to Freire(1970) the education system in developing countries today, especially in South America, is anti-developmental because it turns students into passive "containers" of obsolete, lifeless facts rather than critical, active social beings. Thus, education is a tool to domesticate the people who finally become intimidated, unable to explore the environment for themselves and also submissive to the authority of the oppressor. This coincides with the social and political structures in these societies which are hierarchical and exploitative in nature. Freire calls this the banking concept of education which serves the interests of the oppressors.

Abolition of the banking approach to education is a prerequisite for the emancipation of the masses in developing countries. But the masses also need to acquire a problem-posing strategy for education. Unlike the banking concept of education, the alternative approach must aim at the conscientization of the oppressed.

By conscientization, Freire (1970:70-71) means a pervasive transformation of consciousness which simultaneously develops men's "power to perceive critically the way they exist in the world with which and in which they find themselves; they come to see the world not as a static reality, but as a reality in process, in transformation". To Freire, this is important because "the form of action men adopt is to a large extent a function of how they perceive themselves in the world".

How is the conscientization of the oppressed to be effected? Simply, it is by means of the removal of the deeply rooted fatalism and superstition in the oppressed class and their discovery of their inherent power as men through problem-posing education (Epstein, 1978:261). In this respect, the role of the teacher is crucial.

The teacher's role in Freire's problem-posing education is of specific interest in this study. As was mentioned above, Freire believes that the banking concept of education in which knowledge is considered a gift bestowed by the educated upon the ignorant, has been developed in the interest of the oppressor. In his own words (Freire,

1970:58), "education thus becomes an act of depositing, in which the students are depositories and the teacher is the depositor. Instead of communicating, the teacher issues communiques and makes deposits which the students patiently receive, memorize, and repeat". Consequently, "the scope of action allowed to the students extends only as far as receiving, filing, and storing the deposits". They become passive and submissive.

By the same token, either consciously or unconsciously, the teacher always plays a cluster of dominant and authoritarian roles. Without challenge, he presumably teaches, knows everything, thinks, talks, disciplines, and chooses and enforces his choices while the students are supposedly to be taught, thought about, disciplined, know nothing, listen meekly, and comply (Ibid:59).

In other words, Freire believes that in this anti-developmental form of education the teacher is like a knowledge dispenser on whom the students are totally dependent; thus, his work becomes a central part of the whole machinery of oppression in the wider society.

With the introduction of the problem-posing education, all this in Freire's view is going to change. The new form of education begins "with the solution of the teacher-student contradiction, by reconciling the poles of the contradiction so that both are simultaneously teacher and students" (Ibid). As a result, teaching is now carried out in the form of dialogue between the teacher and the

students through which every participant sees the reality of the world and becomes conscious of being oppressed. This, according to Freire, is an essential substructure of non-violent revolution.

The role of the teacher as a knowledge dispenser who alienates concepts from action is rejected. Instead, he should serve as a mentor or the 'catalyst' in the process of learning. By generating ideas from his critical experience and understanding of the oppressive social structure, his task is to create the conditions under which he and his students set out to initiate change. This, in turn, leads to the conscientization of more people, and eventually the liberation of the oppressed in the entire locality.

What kind of academic qualifications does a teacher like this need to have? As implied in Freire's (Ibid:73) view, teacher training of the type that is provided in western societies is not that which should be used by a liberator-educator. What counts is the development of a deepened consciousness of his situation which "leads him to apprehend that situation as an historical reality susceptible of transformation".

In summary, in Freire's problem-posing approach to education, the teacher who is engaged in dialogue with the oppressed educates the masses as well as himself to be aware of the existing oppressive social and political structures. The outcome of this approach is that it is likely to crumble the existing social relationship (Epstein, 1978) which, in

turn, would result in the creation of a new and development-oriented society. He, therefore, is not a teacher in the conventional sense but more a liberator of the oppressed, or an agent of social change.

3.3 Similarities Among the Three Views of the Teacher

Perhaps a look at the distinct similarities among the three views of the ideal teacher will highlight some of the major issues in teacher education. (The Maoist view of the teacher was discussed in Chapter 2.) The first common feature shared by the three views is that the 'ideal' role of a teacher cannot be separated from the kind of society to which he belongs; the nature of the political and economic system influences what kind of teacher is most needed in a society. Generally speaking, the Maoist view of teacher is based on the characteristics of a communist, agricultural society. The teacher should profess communism and treat other members of society -- in this case the masses and students -- in a supportive manner. Moreover, he should do his best to facilitate the flow of knowledge which is regarded in a communist society as a legacy belonging to no individual but to the whole society. Knowledge, as such, must be applicable in the people's endeavor to improve their lot. Therefore, it is practical knowledge with which the Maoist teacher is most concerned. Furthermore, given the relatively few qualified teachers in China, the Maoist view of the teacher results from a compromise of his concern for

professional training and the actual great need of teachers in the country. As a result, Mao came to the conclusion that whoever could teach others something conducive to economic production should be regarded as a teacher, lest the requirement of professional training would bar a large number of cadres and skilled farmers and technicians from passing on their successful experience to those who need it.

The social foundation of his 'ideal' role is also seen in the functionalist and Freirean views of the teacher. The functionalist view is related to the development of a modern, industrial society -- a society that is becoming more and more differentiated with a well defined and stratified occupational hierarchy. Like other professions in this society, teaching is to be performed by a group of trained specialists who identify themselves as the experts in the field. More importantly, their status is (or supposed to be) socially recognized due to the professional training they have had, and as society develops, entry qualifications and professional training of prospective teachers are increased. Consequently, not only their role as judge of children's learning ability is confirmed, but also entry into the profession becomes more difficult and is closed to those who are not professionally trained. In a word, the functionalist view of the teacher's role is tied in with the social hierachy in the industrial society which attributes its success to, among other things, division of labour and increasing pre-service training for jobs.

Like Mao, the Freirean view of the teacher is also particularly valuable in an educationally and economically deprived situation like South America. Therefore, sophisticated professional training is not only rare but would be impractical to demand if the immediate needs of the masses are to be met. To Freire, what the teacher needs most is critical consciousness which will enable him to challenge the entire oppressive social structure, thereby changing the society and accomplishing emancipation of the oppressed. Accordingly, Freire does not regard professional training as a prerequisite for developing teacher competence but makes it clear that the teacher must be able to communicate with and understand the oppressed. Life experience is the teacher's source of knowledge, political consciousness the necessary qualification, and dialogue the methodology in teaching.

Another important common feature of the three views of the teacher is that they all attest to the important role of the teacher in social development. According to the previous analysis, the teachers in China, in South America, and in western industrial societies respectively, would be individuals with different qualifications using different teaching approaches. They all are presumably engaged in a task directly contributing to social development; they teach students the values and skills which are needed to facilitate development in the desired direction. Again, the political and economic systems define what are the desired

and necessary values and skills of life. It is true that, unlike the Maoist and functionalist views of teachers which exhort student's allegiance to the government, the Freirean teacher may encourage students to act contrary to the interest of those who are in a governing role -- more generally the oppressor group. To view it from a different angle, the teacher is also fighting for social development, except that he is using a revolutionary approach.

That the teacher is not playing a politically-neutral, or value-free role is the last similarity among the three views of the teacher. The political values of these three types of society are obvious in the role expected of teachers in each of them. For example, the Maoist teacher is an exemplar of the communist society while the functionalist view of the teacher's role is tied up with the nature of the capitalist society. What then does the Freirean teacher represent? It is difficult to fit the Freirean view of the teacher into any existing political system. Explicitly the Freirean teacher is also politically-oriented. As a teacher, he acts to bring about a social and political change which is to stop oppression on the one hand, and to realize political and economic egalitarianism on the other. All his actions are based on a certain set of political values.

The similarities between these three views of the teacher's role are important to an understanding of the potential roles played by the teacher in a changing society, and the type of teacher education which needs to be provided

in each case. Unfortunately, none of them has focussed on the differences between developed and developing countries by attempting to provide a picture of teacher education within a historical and developmental perspective. As opposed to the conservative role generally played by the teacher in society, the Maoist and the Freirean view of the teacher is focussed on his contribution in bringing about radical social change. To them the teacher should integrate with the masses and teach for the sake of creating an egalitarian society.

As far as developing countries are concerned, not only is a definition of the teacher's role important, but also the relationship between teacher education and educational development has to be understood before a realistic teacher education program can be developed. Therefore, a model based on historical examples which throws light on the relationship between the quality of teachers and educational development is definitely beneficial to everyone concerned with the issue. The Beeby model points in that direction.

3.4 The Beeby Model

Beeby's model attempts first to describe the structure and dynamics of educational systems as they have appeared in western societies through various historical periods. He asserts that throughout history the development of primary school can be divided into the following four stages. These are: (1)the dame school stage, (2) the stage of formalism,

(3)the stage of transition, and (4) the stage of meaning.

Secondly Beeby asserts that the development of primary education must inevitably proceed from one stage to another. He (Beeby, 1966:52) argues that "there is a single linear process of growth of an educational system which all countries must follow or want to follow".

Thirdly Beeby argues, though without much empirical data other than possibly observation, that the qualitative improvements of the teaching force is the key factor that influences the development of education through these various stages. Further, the teacher's ability to promote change is an outcome of their general education and professional training.

The different stages of schooling have important implications for the organization of schools and the education of teachers. The corresponding characteristics between schooling and teaching are illustrated in Fig. 3.

3.4.1 Stage I

Stage I, also called the "dame school" stage, is the stage at which teachers generally are ill-educated. They are either untrained or have only minimal training. Consequently, their teaching tends to be completely composed of mechanical drill in the 3R's-- following the pattern along which they were themselves taught. There is also emphasis on rote-memorization by pupils of relatively meaningless symbols. In short, education at this stage is

Fig. 3 Corresponding Characteristics Between Primary Schooling and Teachers

(1) *Stage*	(2) *Teachers*	(3) *Characteristics*
I. Dame School	Ill-educated, untrained	Unorganized, relatively meaningless symbols; very narrow subject content—3 R's; very low standards; memorizing all-important.
II. Formalism	Ill-educated, trained	Highly organized; symbols with limited meaning; rigid syllabus; emphasis on 3 R's; rigid methods—"one best way"; one textbook; external examinations; inspection stressed; discipline tight and external; memorizing heavily stressed; emotional life largely ignored.
III. Transition	Better-educated, trained	Roughly same goals as stage II, but more efficiently achieved; more emphasis on meaning, but it is still rather "thin" and formal; syllabus and textbooks less restrictive, but teachers hesitate to use greater freedom; final leaving examination often restricts experimentation; little in classroom to cater for emotional and creative life of child.
IV. Meaning	Well-educated, well-trained	Meaning and understanding stressed; somewhat wider curriculum, variety of content and methods; individual differences catered for; activity methods, problem solving and creativity; internal tests; relaxed and positive discipline; emotional and aesthetic life, as well as intellectual; closer relations with community; better buildings and equipment essential.

Source: Taken from Beeby's *The Quality of Education in Developing Countries*, p.72.

characterized by skimpy subject content and little or no regard for teaching methods. This, in Beeby's(1966:59)view, is possibly one of the prime causes of pupil wastage because all except the brightest children cease to achieve much progress in such a system of education. Fortunately, most educational systems in the world have already passed this stage.

3.4.2 Stage II

From Stage I education develops into Stage II -- the stage of formalism. Teachers at this stage are also ill-educated, although by now they have had some formal training. Subject matter is still confined to the 3R's, with some teaching of social facts. Unlike the preceding stage, the connection and meaning of the symbols taught is now usually understood by the pupils at this stage. Because the gap in the knowledge possessed by pupils and teachers is still not very wide, the teachers are afraid of any other questions in the classroom except those which they themselves ask (Ibid).

To Beeby, the stage of formalism has a number of shortcomings. For example, it is highly organized at a routine level, there is a detailed and rigid official syllabus, a restricted number of narrow textbooks, tight external examinations, and a rigorous system of inspection of the work of both pupils and teachers. Teaching methods tend to be reduced to rules, and there might even be insistence on the 'one best way' of teaching any subject (Ibid:62). Education in western societies was at this stage of educational development "in the years that followed the introduction of compulsory education".

Beeby believes that, despite its many shortcomings, the stage of formalism is an advance on the previous stage, but that many schools in developing countries are now struggling at this stage.

3.4.3 Stage III

The stage of transition is the third stage. At this stage, teachers are better educated and trained than at Stage II. Consequently, there is a greater gap between what they know and what the pupils know, and there is thus a wider scope for other subject matter, including arts and crafts, to be taught. Besides, there is provision for more educative materials and facilities like supplementary readers and workshops that take the children beyond the official syllabus.

With regard to teaching style, most subjects are still taught formally but more effectively than before, but the most important value of this stage is that it breeds teachers capable of breaking through to Stage IV.

3.4.4 Stage IV

This is the most desirable stage in the Beeby model. It represents the highest stage of educational development so far and mirrors the present educational system in the West.

The main characteristics of this stage "is the attempt to give each child a deeper and wider understanding of the symbols with which he works" (Ibid:65). As a result, the pupil is encouraged and taught to think for himself because meaning and understanding play an increasing part in his day. The curriculum is further widened to include more creative work and physical activities.

Also at this stage there tends to be a relaxation of classroom discipline and a tremendous decline in the importance, if not total disappearance, of the external examination. All this provides conditions for Stage IV to prevail and to be sustained. This in his view is the stage which a modern education system should achieve.

3.5 Limitation and Constraints of the Beeby Model

It would be useful next to look at some of the criticisms of Beeby's "stages model" of educational development. First of all, Beeby's assertion that the development of education passes through certain quite identifiable stages has been criticized. Guthrie (1980a) considers the division of educational development into four stages as arbitrary. The characteristics of teacher behavior at each stage are not distinct enough to arrive at the classification of stages which Beeby develops. According to Guthrie(Ibid:424), Beeby uses different characteristics as labels for different stages. If the stage of formalism and meaning are so labelled with reference to the type of teacher, the dame school is not -- it is an attribute of the type of school, instead. By the same token, within a stage there can be different types of schools and teaching styles. The problem arises from the fact that Beeby's labels are not all mutually exclusive (e.g. transition) or equivalent (e.g. dame school vs formalism), and this causes some confusion.

The underlying point which he intends to make, however, is still valid, i.e. that a modern school system cannot be implemented in a developing country without having laid the groundwork, and one of the chief elements of this groundwork is an increased level of education and training among its teachers.

The second claim by Beeby that all educational development must occur in certain definite stages is more difficult to substantiate. Guthrie in referring to Myrdals methodological criticism of Rostow's stages of economic growth accepts the point that Beeby's model of educational stages is teleological in nature, involving an a-priori biased selection of criteria of advancement. The prediction of stage, therefore, is self-fulfilling. Bacchus (1967:447) had earlier made a somewhat similar criticism of Beeby's theory of stages of educational development arguing that Beeby's work "is in fact the application of the neo-evolutionary theory of change in the development of education". Bacchus went on to point out that "because of its neatness, simplicity, the idea of progress (which it contains), it tends to provide a reassuring scheme by which to set out in an orderly manner changes in education and at the same time justify the seeming inconsistencies in educational practice in societies at different levels of development". But this does not mean that it explains educational change.

More importantly, the direction of educational development in the Beeby model is derived from experiences in western societies. Therefore, the underlying assumption -- that the teaching practices currently used in these societies comprises 'better' teaching is challengeable. One cannot consider that "effective" teaching strategies would be the same irrespective of the cultural environment in which the schooling takes places. In other words, one cannot assume that the teaching styles that would maximize learning outcomes in western societies would do the same in a country like China. The question of how to achieve the "stage of meaning" in schools in China might be more problematic than as assumed in the Beeby model. But to be fair to the author he himself, as an educator with much experience in developing countries, is cautious about the effectiveness of borrowing or transplanting foreign educational systems or practices without discrimination in the context of less developed countries (Beeby, 1960:55).

Another point is that as Guthrie (1980a: 422) notes, Beeby's belief that "the resemblances between the demand made on the school by various countries are very much greater than their differences" is unexamined. As he points out, educators, before and after Beeby, have been proposing the development in newly independent countries of national education systems which are uniquely their own rather than being copies of those in countries where the culture, political tradition, and economic production are so

different.

Thirdly, the assumption in the model that teachers are the key agents of change and the major driving force behind the development of the educational system is without research evidence and it fails to give enough recognition to the role played by other institutions in the society as a whole. As Bacchus(1967:447) points out, "Beeby treats the educational institution as a distinct and independent entity whose progress and dynamics are unrelated to the total society". Clearly, the nation's economic and political structures have great influences on the development of education.

It is true, however, that primary education is undergoing changes all over the world and in these, as Guthrie (1980a: 429-432) notes, teachers, by virtue of their improved general and professional training, have been making a signal contribution. In fact, as was previously indicated, the available research evidence seems to show that teachers are probably a more crucial element in the qualitative improvement of education in the economically less developed societies than in say a country like the USA.

3.6 The Possible Value of the Beeby Model

Despite theoretical controversies which surround it, the Beeby model, in Guthrie's (1980a: 424) opinion, provides empirical characteristics against which developments in education and improvements in teaching strategies can be

made. In other words, the model can serve as a basis on which can later be built a serious study of the process of educational development in a country. Another important attribute of Beeby's model is that, in suggesting his stages of educational development, he is not, unlike Rostow, trying to make his model fit some transparent political aims (Ibid:420).

Guthrie further defends the Beeby model by arguing that the stage of meaning is still relevant in the discussion of educational development in the Third World for two reasons. The first is a pragmatic one. For Guthrie (Ibid:428),

> It is certainly arguable that if people in developing countries want a cash economy and the material benefits of modern technology, then they are going to have to know, understand and acquire at least some of the concomitant intellectual methods and attitudes.

Secondly, while Guthrie admits that although the stage of meaning may not be entirely appropriate to developing countries, he maintains the possibility that some features of this stage may be relevant and useful in these societies (Ibid).

In replying to the challenge that teachers might not be the central change agents in educational development, Beeby(1980a:442) clarifies his own position 14 years later by remarking that

> this was a mistake if (the model) gave anyone the

> impression that improvement in the education and training of teachers can be relied on, by itself, to effect a transition from one stage to the next. If I were writing the book again, I should spell out more clearly the other obstacles to improving the quality of education.

Moreover, in his *Assessment of Indonesian Education*, published in 1979, Beeby deals with lack of educational supplies and materials, administrative and psychological constraints to changes in teaching styles. In addition, he also analyses some of the political and social tensions that can interfere with a program for changing school practice. In a word, "Beeby now believes that genuine improvement in the education system as a whole therefore depends upon qualitative change of several kinds" (Barrington,1980:111).

At the same time, as Guthrie(1980a) and Barrington(1980) point out, the Beeby model has been used to a great extent in educational research which has produced further evidence to support the model.'

Finally, there is an important aspect of Beeby's model which can be valuable for anyone studying the development of education in less developed countires. Although the model was developed primarily to describe developments in primary education, it has attempted to indicate a number of characteristics among teachers at every stage in the development

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'For a detailed elaboration on the use and results of the Beeby model in educational research, see Barrington, J., 1980; and Guthrie, G., 1980a.

of education. Subsequently, researchers like Chang(1971), Larking(1974), Lewis(1970), Maraj(1974), and Musgrave(1974) have already extended Beeby's model of teacher characteristics to include the role of teacher educators in attempts to widen the scope and give a more in-depth treatment of teacher education in developing countries. In other words, though it was originally designed as a model for understanding the qualitative aspect of the development of primary education, the Beeby model has also tended to provide a schematic understanding of teacher characteristics which reflect the level of development in teacher education. For example, given Beeby's other argument that the increasing knowledge gap between the teacher and pupils is a factor that stimulates creative teaching, the generally mechanical teaching method which emphasizes drills and rote-memorization at Stage II can be seen as a result of the narrow curriculum and the thin professional knowledge with which teachers in training are provided at that stage.

Therefore, despite the many criticisms of the Beeby model, I found it of use, though in a limited sense. With the array of qualtitive data that has been collected by the ethnographic method which was used in this study, the stages described in the Beeby model proved useful simply to identify the point which the development of primary education in China (Harbin in particular) had reached at the time of the study.

In other words, the Beeby model provided a useful bench mark against which one could assess how far the educational system of Harbin had moved towards the "stage of meaning" which all educators would agree can be considered the most desirable stage of primary education. Therefore, in this study the model was mainly used as an "ideal type" in the Weberian sense against which developments in the Chinese educational system could be assessed. The model also provided clues as to what "deficiencies", if any, might have to be made up if the educational system is finally to reach that "stage of meaning" at which point it should be able to make its maximum contribution to social and economic development in China. It is in these ways that the model has been found useful.

It must be pointed out again that the purpose of the research is not to test Beeby's model -- or any hypothesis for that matter. It is to describe and analyse the dynamics of the educational process in operation in the normal school and in some primary schools in Harbin, Heilongjiang, in order to increase our understanding of the educational system in that city. In addition, it is hoped to indicate how far the system falls short of reaching the "stage of meaning" in Beeby's model.

3.7 Recent Development of Teacher Education in China -- Movements Toward the Stage of Meaning

The development of teacher education in China over the last 36 years suggests that there have been progressive improvements in this area during this period. Since the early 1950's a series of attempts have been made to upgrade teacher education in China. For example, despite the setback in educational development due to the unstable political and social situation during the Cultural Revolution, the qualitative aspect of primary teacher education today, i.e. qualifications of students and teachers, is generally higher than that of the past three decades. Unfortunately, there is not much literature which would help us to understand the modes of student-teacher interaction in the primary and normal schools in China. From materials published in China in recent years, we know that the Chinese leadership and educators have also called for the use of problem-solving methods in primary education. In other words, the Chinese are also looking forward to moving towards Beeby's fourth stage of primary education, by placing emphasis on meanings of symbols rather than rote-memorization in learning. A vice-premier made explicit this point at the National Educational Conference on May 17, 1985(*Beijing Review* June 17, 1985:19).

> For many years, we have not been good at using the elicitation method in school education, or even in the theoretical education of cadres. To varying

> degrees, we still use the force-feeding method. The students are required to listen to their teachers in class and memorize what they are taught. They have to rely on mechanical memorization to pass examinations. So the "educated" cannot bring their initiative into play. This teaching method comes mainly from the influence of decadent traditional educational thinking. If a fundamental change is not made, it will be impossible to train large numbers of qualified people needed by the new period, especially the best qualified personnel, even if the state substantially increases its allocations for education.

Emphasis on meaning in schooling which is a manifestation of progressive education is not the only criterion of the development of primary education. On the other hand, there may be other cultural and political factors that impede the prevalence of one or the other characteristic described in a higher stage of educational development of the model. For example, an account of student-teacher interaction without considering the impact of traditional and communist values on social interaction in China is not only incomplete but also misleading. By the same token, an evaluation of the qualitative aspect of primary teacher education in China must be based on the particular culture of schooling in the society. Therefore, as far as this research is concerned, the first step is to

generate sufficient information through ethnographic techniques for a solid understanding of the development of primary teacher education in China. Then it will be possible to see how far China still has to go to achieve the "stage of meaning" in its educational system.

3.8 Restatement of the Problem

As mentioned before, it is my intention to study the characteristics of primary teacher education in China, particularly in areas related to the teaching characteristics, the curriculum, school facilities, and also qualifications of the prospective teachers and teacher educators. Specifically, this research will endeavour:-

1. To describe the dynamics of teacher education -- particularly that of the normal school and the primary school system -- in terms of teaching style, the curriculum, school facilities, and qualifications of teachers in primary schools and normal schools in China (Harbin in particular) over the past 36 years.
2. From a description of the present situtation to attempt to assess how far China's educational development falls short of achieving the "stage of meaning" in the Beeby model.
3. To discuss some of the possibilities and implications of further changes along these lines for development in China.

4. Research Method

4.1 Ethnographic Research Techniques

The focus of this research is to describe and evaluate the qualitative aspects of primary teacher education in China today. As pointed out earlier, such a study would not be sound unless the culture and value system of that particular society are also taken into account. The particular methods used to carry out this research are ethnographic techniques, especially participant observation and ethnographic interviews which have been able to generate substantial information regarding the research problems.

Subsequently, a few pertinent themes have been generated. Owing to the lack of related literature on primary teacher education in China, these themes would be of special importance for future research. Ethnographic techniques, as Wolcott (1975:114) says, are more suited to generating themes.

4.1.1 Participant Observation

Since ethnographic techniques are the research tool used in this piece of research work, a general account of the techniques explains how, for the most part, the research questions were approached.

The method of participant observation implies personal involvement and detailed description of the situation under study. While in the field, I was guided by the advice "to

watch and record everything else that occurs, decribe all the actors present, or make notes of the physical setting" (Spradley 1980:54). In other words, I was cautious to avoid blocking out things as other observers would ordinarily ignore because I wanted to be fully aware of things happening around me.

There were different levels of participation in which I was involved during field work. For example, in a few occasions I had the opportunity of becoming a 'full' member of the situation when some student-teachers were discussing the results of their teaching practice. More often, I just participated passively, i.e. sitting in the back of the class watching how the lesson was conducted. Sometimes, I was involved moderately which means that, as Spradley (Ibid:59-60) says, I was maintaining a balance between being an insider and an outsider.

4.1.2 The Ethnographic Interview

The ethnographic interview is the other frequently used technique in this research. To quote Spradley (1979:59),

> It is best to think of ethnographic interview as a series of friendly conversations into which the researcher slowly introduces new elements to assist informants to respond as informants. Exclusive use of these new ethnographic elements, or introducing them too quickly, will make interviews become like a formal interrogation. Rapport will evaporate, and

informants may discontinue their cooperation.

In my use of ethnographic interview, I always made explicit the purpose of the research and sometimes explained to my informants what I was doing. All this helped me get to the kind of conversation needed for his research. The most important aspect of this research technique, however, was the types of questions that I asked. According to Spradley (Ibid:60), there are three types of ethnographic questions, namely, descriptive questions, structural questions, and contrast questions. As far as this research is concerned, I asked descriptive questions like "Could you describe the routines you do in your class?" to collect an ongoing sample of an informant's language. By the same token, the structural and contrast questions enabled me to discover information about the informant's personal understanding of the topic discussed in the interview. Examples of the structural questions are: "In terms of attitudes towards learning, what are the different kinds of students in your class?" and "In terms of attitudes towards teaching, what are the different kinds of teachers you know?" For the constrast questions, examples are like these: "You have told me that you teach only three lessons every day. Why are you always so busy?" and "I was in your class this morning. I realized that you gave your pupils less than three minutes for group discussion in the whole lesson. Why do you say that discussion is important in learning?" Obviously the actual wording of the questions was different when translated

into Chinese but the above examples should give the reader an idea of the types of appropriate questions asked for this research.

At the same time, I also employed a number of different techniques to record what I was observing and finding out in the field. These included fieldnotes, tape recordings, and pictures, etc. that document the education system and the community under study. Besides, I also kept a dated journal recording my experiences, indicating ideas, fears, problems, and so on.

4.2 Rationale of Research Method

China is a vast country, with a population of more than 1 billion. The crucial point here is to note that such demographic characteristics are important to the understanding of educational development in China; education is more developed in some provinces, cities, counties, or even villages than in others. Therefore, as Unger (1982:4) has pointed out, "Any scholar who tried to follow concretely the (educational) debates, experiments, failures, and successes in all of China's diverse regions would very likely end with a welter of indistinct and confusing images."

Accordingly, I concentrated on the study of primary teacher education in Harbin -- the capital city of the Province of Heilongjiang. There I was able to examine extensively and consistently the qualitative aspect of the facilities and teaching personnel in its primary and normal

schools.

Also, by employing ethnographic research techniques, I collected an abundance of information concerning the impact of the cultural and emergent political values on the interaction between pupils and teachers in the classrooms in Harbin.

At the same time, attempts were made to relate the finding of this particular research to trends on the development of primary teacher education in the country.

4.3 Background Information on the Community -- Harbin

Since this research was undertaken in Harbin, Heilongjiang, a general introduction of the social context of the province and the city seems necessary.

Harbin is the capital city of Heilongjiang, which is situated in the northernmost border region of northeast China. According to *the Almanac of China's Economy* (1981:822), the province has an area of more than 460,000 sq. km. -- five percent of the total area in the country --, and is rich in minerals. Apart from coal, it has vast deposits of gold, copper, aluminium, lead, zinc and other nonferrous and rare metals. The annual production of petroleum in Daqing, the oil city of the province, is about 50 per cent of the national total.

Economically speaking, Heilongjiang is one of China's main centres for coal, petroleum, timber and machine-building industries. Moreover, it is a province in

which mechanization in agriculture is expected to be accomplished at an earlier date than in other provinces (Tung, 1982: 75). Today, the total population of the province is 33 million, and less than two-thirds (19 million) live in the rural area (*Almanac of China*, 1984: 84).

With regard to educational development, it is reported (*Beijing Review*, April 2, 1984:23-24) that on an average, there are 440 college or university graduates for every 100,000 individuals in China. Heilongjiang, with an average of 517, exceeds this national average.

The literacy rate in the province is also above the national average. In 1982, there were 161 illiterates or semi-illiterates per thousand people over 12 years old in Heilongjiang; the national average was 235 per thousand (*The Glorious 35 Years*, 1984: 142).

In 1982, there were five million primary pupils in the province, 4.7 times that in 1949. In the same year, the enrollment of middle school students was two million, 90 times that in 1949. The enrollment in the normal schools also increased from 13,073 in 1976 to 18,431 in 1981. In the same period, the number of full-time teachers in the normal school increased from 1,024 to 1,496 respectively (*Almanac of China's Education*, 1984: 997-999).

Harbin, apart from being the capital city, is the political, economic, and cultural centre of Heilongjiang. The city has a total area of 1637 sq. kms, with a population of 2.5 million. About 90 per cent of the population live in

the urban area. The city is also an industrial centre, famous for machine-manufacturing, and other heavy industries. For example, of the total industrial products of the urban sector valued 5962 million yuan in 1983, 3338 million (over 55 per cent) were from heavy industries (*The Almanac of China*, 1984: 48-86). The income per capita was 793 yuan in 1984.

As far as the educational development in Harbin is concerned, the following is a table indicating the condition of primary education.

Fig. 4.1 Development of Primary Education In Harbin''

Year	Enrollment in Primary School	Percent of Total School-age Children
1956	146,459	76.6
1966	449,254	93.7
1976	276,516	93.6
1984	239,730	98.0

In 1983, there were 10,282 primary teachers in Harbin. In 1984, the numbers of junior and senior middle school students were 127,321 (80% of age cohort) and 47,212 (40% of age cohort) respectively.''

With respect to the system of primary education in the city, most of the schools are whole-day schools, meaning pupils attend classes in the morning and afternoon. There are still a few bi-sessional schools. To fully utilize the

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'' Figures are supplied by the Department of Education, Heilongjiang Province.
''Source: as above.

school premises and because of lack of teachers, these bi-sessional schools conduct classes for half the pupils in the morning and the other half in the afternoon. The total hours of class are slightly less and there are less extra-curricular activities. On the other hand, there are four key-point schools in Harbin.'[13]

4.4 Procedures of Research

During the process of collecting relevant data for this thesis in Harbin, most scheduled research activities were completed smoothly. Given the cooperation and help from officials and others, I was able to acquire valuable experience over 12 weeks with the education system in the city. For example, I had the opportunity to visit classes and interview students of the teachers' university and the teachers' college. In China, while the teachers' university trains teachers for senior middle schools, the teachers' college (or normal college) is a non-degree granting institution which also enrolls senior middle school graduates, but for a period of three years to prepare them for teaching in junior middle schools. In Chinese, they are called shizhuan, a short form of shifeng zhuanke xuexiao which, in English, literally means teacher training specialized school. Knowledge of these higher level institutions of teacher education enabled me to better come to grips with the research problems.

'[13]Source: as above.

On the other hand, some technical adjustments were made later during fieldwork due to the lack of information about Harbin when the research proposal was drafted. For example, it was assumed that in a city like Harbin of over two million people there would have been a few primary teacher education institutes of which I could have visited at least three. After arriving there, I was told that there was only one normal school in the city, but, if I wished, visits to normal schools in other cities could be arranged. In order to begin with a broader understanding of the research problem, I took the opportunity to visit the primary schools and teacher training institutions in two other smaller cities in the same province. They were Daqing and Shuihua. (For locations of these two cities, see Appendix A.)

Since what was to be observed in the schools in these two cities appeared to be very similar to that in Harbin in terms of the classroom setting and the administration of the schools,[13] information obtained in these two cities will also be cited. The following is an outline of my research activities in the three cities.

I arrived in Harbin in the beginning of March and was arranged to reside in the Harbin Teachers' University the following day. With help from the university and a visiting professor from Canada resident at the university, I was able

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[13]The schools in Harbin have more teachers with pre-service training and more graduates of the three- or four-year normal school. Most trained teachers in the primary schools in Daqing and Shuihua have only one or two years pre-service training. Also unlike those in Harbin and Daqing, primary education in Shuihua is still a five-year program.

to meet and interview professors and students at that university. Moreover, I was permitted to use the materials in the library.

After a few days, it was arranged for me to visit Harbin Normal School -- the only normal school in Harbin -- and its attached primary school. In addition, I was to visit another primary school in town. Both were key-point primary schools.

In Harbin, I observed classes and interviewed all my target informants: headmasters, normal school teachers, in-service primary teachers and normal school students. After having been introduced to the leadership of each school through the government official who took care of my stay in the city, I was left to contact the schools and individual informants directly. The time and place for the interview or observation were decided both by the informants and myself.

While still affiliated to Harbin Teachers' University, I left Harbin twice to visit some primary schools and teacher training institutes in Daqing and Shuihua. I spent around ten days in each city. In Shuihua, I visited a shizhuan instead because there was no normal school in the city. There I also visited two primary schools -- one key-point and one ordinary school. As in Harbin, I interviewed heads of schools as well as teachers in Shuihua. In addition, I had a long interview with an official of the local education bureau. In Daqing, I visited a shizhuan, a

normal school (again it was the only normal school in the city), and a key-point primary school. It was useful that all these three institutes were located on the large, enclosed campus where I resided. Therefore, I had the chance to interview students and observe their self-study lessons in the evening. For reference's sake, the major research activities of my field work are listed below:-

1. Kinds of Institutes Visited

Institutes Visited	Number
Teachers' university	1(Harbin)
Shizhuan	3(1 in every city)
Normal school	2(1 in Harbin and 1 in Daqing)
Primary schools	5(2 key-point in Harbin,1 key-point and 1 non key-point in Shuihua, 1 key-point in Daqing)

2. Kinds and Number of Target Interview

Types of Target Informants Met	Number
Headmasters/Headmistresses	7(1 from every primary school and normal school; except two, all were head-mistresses)
Normal school teachers	10(6 in Harbin, 4 in Daqing)
Normal school students	15(7 in Harbin, 8 in Daqing)
Primary school teachers	12(8 in Harbin, 2 in Daqing and 2 in Shuihua)

3. Observations of Classes

Institutes	No. of Periods
Shizhuan	8(4 in Daqing and 4 in Shuihua)
Normal school	About 45
Primary school	About 85

4. Other Related Research Activities

1. Interviews of government officials related to education
2. Interviews of teachers and representatives of shizhuan, middle or primary schools
3. Interviews of university students who were formerly teachers of middle or primary schools
4. Total responded questionnaire collected
   a. primary school teachers (138)
   b. normal school teachers (43)
   c. normal school students (62)
   Total (243)

To sum up, the key informants for this research were the three groups of teachers, namely two regular primary teachers, two student-teachers, and two primary teacher educators. More than 240 other people concerned with either primary education or primary teacher education were invited to respond to the questionnaire (see Appendix B). Some of them were also interviewed.

Regarding sampling of primary schools, it turned out that four out of the five primary schools visited in Heilongjiang were key-point schools. The focus of research was the development of primary teacher education, in regard to the nature of its training program and the qualifications of the teacher-educators and the candidates for training. Therefore, although most interviews of primary teachers and

observations of primary lessons were carried out in the key-point schools, the information obtained should reflect the overall development of primary teacher education in the community.

4.5 Doing Ethnography in Heilongjiang Province, China

To end this chapter, it seems appropriate to point out some interesting aspects of my contact with the government officials and school authorities in Heilongjiang Province. This may shed light upon my field work experience and also on the social circumstances-under which this research was conducted.

As an outsider and a "guest" (a term officials in the three cities I visited used to refer to their relation with me), I tended to act rather passively in the beginning. That seemed to fit in well with the administrative system in China. After explaining to representatives of the government departments and organizations concerned the purpose of my visit, all I could do was to wait because I was aware of the fact that, according to the Chinese tradition, it is impolite to urge your host to do things for you. The officials, however, were efficient. Within a few days, officials in Harbin had provided me with a recommendation letter, stating who I was as well as when and which cities in the province I could visit. The letter served as my "passport"; it introduced me to officials in other cities when I first met them, thus gaining their trust and support.

I must emphasize here that the letter stated clearly that the government officials in the province should help me out in the whole research for free because I was recommended to them by an important foreign friend of the Heilongjiang government at the University of Alberta.

Friendship and trust and help go together in the Chinese culture, and I sensed that they were the most crucial elements of success for an outsider's research project like mine. Because of friendship and trust, I was allowed to conduct the research in my own style, without the slightest bit of governmental interference.

As far as social life was concerned, the government officials arranged almost everything for me, from free transportation to farewell banquets. Such help was very important to me as a foreign researcher in an economically less developed country like China. The only thing that upset me was that it seemed difficult for me to make counter-suggestions even when I knew I would not feel comfortable if I followed their suggestions.

The other thing I should point out is the social atmosphere for research in China today. Let me make it clear that I did not sense any major political hindrance to my research throughout the three months in Heilongjiang. In fact, I was surprised to find that my informants were so ready to talk. Yet I found a few practices in the institutions visited which were not helpful to an academic research. First, it was obvious that teachers and normal

school students there were still not used to answering questionnaires. For example, they were reluctant to give their opinions, in written form, about their jobs and schools. Most respondents simply dismissed Questions 10 and 11 in my questionnire which asked if they were satisfied with their jobs and what kinds of changes they would like to see introduced in their schools. As a result, the questionnaire itself failed to yield sufficient information for discussion on the educational reform in Harbin today.

Secondly, owing to the school environment, I could only administer the questionnaire to most of the teachers through the headmasters/headmistresses. Except in two schools, I could not collect the same number of questionnaires given out. Did some teachers not like to answer them or what? It was difficult for me to judge. One interesting story, perhaps, would enable us to understand better the schools in China today.

One day I was in the office of the headmistress (of a primary school in a smaller city) who was to give me back my questionnaires. After receiving about half of the questionnires distributed in her school the day before, I happened to see that there were still some others put on the top of a cabinet. I reminded her that. She smiled and said, "Those are no good." I asked her why. "Those are not completed," said she, also in a relaxed manner. I said that that did not matter and any information, no matter how incomplete, about the teachers in her school would be useful

to me. She was then quite embarrassed, but was still reluctant to give me those questionnaires. Fortunately, one official form the local bureau of education who was with me all the time in that school came to my rescue. He simply said, "Let him have them. Nothing is serious there." The headmistress complied, of course. When I studied the two different piles of questionnaire later, I could not find any obvious difference between them.

I should also record this last incident which, to me, best illustrates the hospitality of my Chinese hosts and their attitudes towards the rights of school children. Again it happened in that small city mentioned before. Because of the lifestyle that I have learned in Hong Kong and Canada, I must have unconsciously presented myself to the government officials there as a person who treasured time very greatly. Knowing that I had planned to stay in their city for about ten days with a lot of research work to do, an official mentioned to me that they were thinking of opening some primary classes on Sunday so that I could observe. He added that they felt that I did not want to lose a day in the city. I was overwhelmed. In Harbin a school personnel said almost the same thing before in a less serious manner. How serious they were was not important. That, however, at least tells us that the school authority and the government in China have some extraordinary authority over school children that their western counterparts do not have. In reply, I indicated firmly that my personal concern for the welfare of

school children and the ethical code of my research methodology would not allow me to accept it even if it were so arranged.

Finally, I appreciate the cooperations of the students, the teachers, the headmisters/headmistresses, and the government officials in the province so much that I really feel I should at least go back once more to thank them personally again.

5. Findings: Primary Schools and Teacher Education in Harbin

5.1 Primary Education in Harbin

A fuller understanding of the primary teacher education program in a society necessiates a prior grasp of the nature and quality of its primary education because of the interdependent relationship of these two areas. Since there is usually some correspondence between the dynamics of schools and the institution in which teachers are trained, it was decided there was need to have some awareness of the current work of the primary schools. Let us begin with the physical conditions of the primary schools as I saw in Harbin.

5.1.1 Physical Conditions and Organization of Primary Schools

The big but faded school buildings of the two primary schools I visited in Harbin looked harmonious with their neighborhoods. Both were surrounded by government office buildings, city facilities like hospitals and parks, etc., middle schools, a few factories, and residences. Actually, one of these schools was built after 1945 as a boarding school for children of martyrs in the Sino-Japanese war but changed to a day-school when all of them graduated a few years later. The other was built in 1956 and affiliated with the normal school nearby for the purpose of student teaching (see Appendix C, pictures 1 and 2). They were two of the

largest primary schools in the city; each had an enrollment of over 1,300 pupils in 1985.

Notwithstanding their status of being key-point schools, the physical conditions of both schools were far from satisfactory. It was obvious that physical maintenance had been neglected. The interior of the two school buildings had seriously deteriorated. Classrooms showed obvious signs of wear as was evidenced by the windows, the desks and chairs, and the chalkboard.

Classroom facilities were simple. Apart from the chalkboard and the teacher's desk, each classroom usually had a desk organ for the music lesson, a cabinet for the teacher, and an overhead projector. The installation of an overhead projector in every classroom, according to the assistant headmistress, was the result of the much talked about educational reform in recent years. Owing to lack of funds, glass transparencies were shown on a piece of white cloth or, as in the other key-point school, simply on the wall. In my role as researcher I always sat at the back to conduct participant observation, but the images of projection were so blurry that I usually saw no more than patches of colors (see Appendix C, pictures 3, 4 and 5).

The classrooms were packed with pupils; the size of classes ranged from 55 to 63 pupils -- usually the junior grades were smaller because childbearing has been decreasing since the Cultural Revolution. Every classroom was so packed with seats that if a pupil was sitting in-between others or

against a side wall and needed to come out to the front of the class, then the other children near him had to stand up to allow him to go by.

Classroom setting in these schools was traditional; desks and chairs were arranged in rows, and pupils sat facing the teacher who always stood in front of the chalkboard. In every classroom there was only one chalkboard which was large but usually shabby. In front of it was the teacher's desk. The seating arrangement was usually kept for a year. For practical reasons, the shorter pupils were put to sit in the front. Very often, a boy was placed next to a girl.

In the classroom, there were usually posters which aimed at inspiring pupils to study hard. Posters seen included proverbs from westerners like Pavlov, Newton, Einstein, and of important Chinese figures, or political slogans like "Contribute to the modernization of our motherland through education", etc. In addition, there were always charts showing the progress of individual pupils with their studies. The pupils who received a high row of "red stars" were usually the most promising ones in the class.

Neither of these two schools had a gymnasium. Instead, each school had a large unpaved playground which had some simple physical exercise equipment (see Appendix C, pictures 6, 7 and 8). During a physical education lesson, music from the loudspeaker was heard as distinctly in many classrooms as at the playground. It seemed that teachers and pupils

were used to it and thus not bothered.

Though laboratory equipment for the science lesson was available, it was obsolete. For example, in one school, the laboratory was a spacious room which had large tables, but it had no water taps or Bunsen burners (see Appendix C, picture 9). Instead, only primitive equipment like alcohol burners and very limited kinds of chemicals were available. More Importantly, not every science lesson was held in this laboratory. The laboratory was used when the teacher decided to demonstrate to pupils some simple experiments and wanted them to do these experiments. Otherwise, the science classes were conducted in the home classroom, with or without simple experiments.

Lighting and heating, however, were two big problems in these schools. To save expenses and because of frequent power failures due to great demand for electricity from factories and other commercial organizations in the city, lights in these schools were rarely turned on. Instead, classrooms were lighted by natural light. Heating in the classroom was transmitted from a central coal-burning furnance. The weak heating was hardly warm enough in the long, cold winter when temperatures dropped to as low as -38°C. (The annual average temperature was just 3.5°C.) In winter, many pupils placed a pillow-like cushion on their cold wooden chair. Still sniffing sounds were constantly heard throughout the lesson.

A few other points need be noted about how these two schools were run. First, all primary schools in Harbin were government schools, meaning that they were directly supervised by the government. The two key-point schools, however, were receiving more funds, usually up to one-third more, than most ordinary primary schools. Yet, the total expenditure of these key-point schools was quite humble.

For example, the running cost of each school in 1984 was not more than 150,000 yuan ($75,000 Canadian approximately). In other words, the average expenditure per annum on each pupil was less than 120 yuan. As far as revenue was concerned, about 100,000 yuan of which 90 per cent was for teachers' salary were from the national government, paid through the provincial government. The remainder was raised by the school itself.

Secondly, primary education in Harbin was not free. The tuition fee was six yuan per pupil a year, but the school was allowed to collect from the enterprise or large factory as much as 10 times of this amount per pupil if the parent was working there. One school was running a small factory which was totally operated by hired workers. No pupils were involved in its production because productive labor in the primary school which had been pronounced during the Cultural Revolution was abolished. Last year the small factory earned for the school about 3,000 yuan of extra funds. The other school did not have a factory but gained almost the same amount of extra revenue in 1984 because an older building of

the school was rented to a T.V. university which offered courses to adult students through video-taped lectures.

Thirdly, these schools also received small annual subsidies as well as other educational equipment like sports shoes and jackets, and transparencies, etc., from the municipal bureau of education. Besides, they were the first schools to have been alloted the newest educational facilities from the Ministry of Education of the central government.'[4] For example, each of them was alloted ten micro-computers for instructional use.

Fourthly, every class in the school had a monitor who helped to carry out classroom routines like collecting assignments, and distributing snacks during recess, etc. In a grade 2 class visited, a girl monitor was also assigned to daily check if her fellow classmates' fingers were clean enough. Every day, a group of four pupils were responsible for clean-up in each class during recess. They splashed water on the floor, then swept it.

Finally, as key-point schools, these two primary schools used to select pupils through an entrance examination. This practice, however, had been abolished two years before, and at the time of my visit, pupils were enrolled in neighbourhood schools without examination. As in most cities in China, primary education in Harbin comprised a six-year

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[4] The National Ministry of Education was disbanded in 1985 due to its incapability in directing the educational reform after 1976. Later, a new national Commission on Education was set up in June 1985. This new Commission is headed by one of the four vice-premiers of the State Council. See *Beijing Review*, December 23, 1985: 22.

program, starting at the age of seven. Pupils went to school from Monday to Saturday, but on Saturday afternoon, there were no classes but extra-curricular activities.

In reviewing the points made in this section one can say that as compared with an ordinary elementary school in Canada whose annual average cost per pupil reaches 2,000 dollars (over 4000 yuan), the primary schools in Harbin were rather modest institutions. The learning environment in these schools would, according to western standards, be considered unsatisfactory. Furthermore, the practice of education was still traditional even in the "pioneers" of primary education -- the key-point schools -- where microcomputers were available for learning. It was the primary education system that the government regarded as the might of the nation's technological and economic transformation. Therefore, since 1976 the government had taken action to elevate the physical and academic quality of the primary schools. For example, the school was now allowed to tap other social resources for more funds.

Let us next take a close look at day-to-day school life in the the primary school, which reflected the mode of pupil-teacher interaction. This was the result of my observation of lessons of a grade three class.

5.1.2 A Day in a Grade Three Class

It was a Monday. The classmistress who was a women had taught in this school for over 20 years. She graduated from

the middle school in 1957, but completed a two-year program of teacher training at the Institute for Teachers of Further Studies in 1983. She was the Chinese language teacher of this class.

At 7:50, I followed her to the class. As we entered the classroom, a voice cried out, "Stand up." The whole class stood up. From their faces, I realized that they were a bit excited and looked at me. Some were even smiling. At the same time, the whole class said, "How are you, teacher?" and "How are you, guest?" The teacher and I responded respectively, "How are you, class?" Then they sat down.

The condition of the classroom was similar to the situation described in the previous section of this chapter. The classroom was packed. So the teacher instructed a pupil, whom I later found out was the monitor, to move a spare chair in the teacher's corner to the far end of a narrow passage between two rows of seats. The passage was wide enough just for one person to walk by.

When a girl sitting next to this additional seat was told to put her pillow cushion on it, she seemed very pleased to comply. Then the teacher asked me to take the seat. I started to count the number of pupils in the class. It was 60. The teacher went to her desk and some pupils (they were row leaders) began to hand in piles of exercise books they had collected from their own rows. Immediately, the teacher opened some of them and started marking while some pupils took out their books and started reading. Some

others were solving mathematical problems. Also a few pupils looked like they were discussing (if not simply chatting) with their neighbors, in a very low voice.

Suddenly, a boy put up his hand but it was not brought to the teacher's attention because she was concentrating on her marking and her head was lowered. The boy called out softly, "Teacher, teacher." Hearing him, she left her seat and approached him. The boy had a problem regarding a chapter in Chinese language she had finished the day before. She talked to the boy for not more than a few seconds. Then she went back to her seat and started marking again. As she later told me she marked the pupils' diaries every morning. She also told me that every morning there was a ten-minute private-study period. The objective was to get pupils ready for classes that day.

At eight, the school bell rang. Slowly the teacher rose and glanced at the whole class. Then she said, "Now lessons begin. Put away your other things." A voice cried out again, "Stand up." The whole class stood up and said, "How are you, teacher?" "How are you, class? Be seated," responded the teacher.

She began this double-period Chinese language class by asking, "Do you have any problems regarding the lesson yesterday?" Seeing that nobody put up a hand, she continued, "Have you prepared at home for today's lesson? I have told you before that when you have problems you should look up the dictionary first. You have learnt how to use the

dictionary, haven't you? If you have any quesion, put up your hand now."

A boy stood up and said that he did not understand the meaning of a phrase in the chapter. The teacher explained it and asked him to sit down. Another boy asked a question concerning the plot of the story. "We'll come to that later," the teacher said. Then she followed on with "Are there any other questions? If not, sit up and listen carefully. I'm going to read the text."

Before she started reading she took about two minutes to explain what the chapter was about. Her reading was rhythmic and full of passion. Every pupil looked closely at her. When she finished, she asked them to open the book and said, "Now you all read the text together but softly."

When finished, she took out a self-made word card and asked, "How do you pronounce this character?" A pupil was called and responded. "How many parts is the character composed of?" asked the teacher. "Two," answered another pupil after being called. "What are they?" the teacher continued asking. "On the left it is -- and on the right it is --," replied the same pupil who had not yet sat down.

The teacher seemed satisified but did not stop. "Now can you tell me other characters which have the same part on the left but a different part on the right? Don't hurry but make sure you get it right." Some pupils put up their hand immediately. Interestingly enough, the teacher was able to pick out the particular characters from her pile of word

cards and showed them to the class when each pupil cried out a Chinese character for answer. About ten pupils had the opportunity to volunteer an answer. Later the teacher asked pupils to use these and other characters to form phrases. At 8:40, the school bell rang again and the lesson stopped. She said, "Now class dismissed." All pupils stood up and said, "Goodbye teacher. Goodbye guest." The teacher replied, "Goodbye class."

As soon as the teacher sat down on her chair, she started marking the pupils' diary again until class resumed ten minutes later. During the break, most pupils remained seated and read their books. A few were moving around to chat with their neighbors in very low voices, while two or three laid their heads on the desks. The lesson continued immediately as soon as the bell rang at 8:50. The teacher rose and the classroom greeting ritual was repeated. Then she began to ask questions concerning the meaning of the story in the textbook. That took 15 minutes. While she was explaining the text, she sometimes switched on the projector and showed four transparencies. Then she said, "You have listened to me reading and we have gone through the difficult words of the text. Who can read the first paragraph?" A girl volunteered. The teacher asked her to sit down when she finished reading. Then the teacher called another pupil for the next paragraph. The calling and reading went on until all four paragraphs were completed.

Without delay, the teacher asked a pupil to come out to "teach" like "a little teacher". She instructed the pupil to raise high the same word cards she used before and called other pupils to pronounce them, one at a time. Also, she told the pupil to name other pupils to form terms with these characters. After the pupil finished, the teacher asked another pupil to do exactly the same.

When the second pupil went back to his seat, she told the class, "Take out your exercise books. We're going to do dictation." She read out the text, phrase by phrase. Two or three pupils were trying to look at their neighbors who immediately used their hand to cover what they had written. The dictation was not yet finished when the second lesson stopped at half-past nine. The teacher hurried to the end of the dictation and dismissed her class. "Stand up," shouted the monitor. "Goodbye class," said the teacher. "Goodbye teacher. Goodbye guest," shouted the class while I was moving to the front.

From half-past nine to 9:40, it was snack time. Two pupils went out and brought back a large tray of Chinese doughnuts. Each pupil was given one which was eaten while they were still in their seats. There was no drink provided so pupils drank water from their own waterbottles. Pupils who had finished left the classroom. After snack, no pupils were allowed to stay in the classroom, but a group of four remain. While other pupils were taking a break in the playground this group of four was cleaning up in the

classroom. They splashed water and swept the floor area around the teacher's desk and by the door.

In the playground, pupils were walking around or playing games. It was a mild winter day. The whole playground became quiet again and the pupils went to their class and lined up immediately when the bell rang at 9:50. Then a male teacher who was standing in the front tried to seek every pupil's attention. Suddenly, a sound came from the loudspeaker. A female voice was shouting out instructions. As soon as the counting "one, two, three, four" was heard, all of them, including other teachers in the playground, started to do physical exercises. The counting "two, two, three, four. Three, two, three, four" went on until the particular kind of exercise was finished. Around ten o'clock, they stopped and started going back to the classroom. According to the headmistress, if the weather was too cold, then pupils did the take-care-of-your-eyes exercise in their classrooms (see Appendix C, picture 10).

When I returned to their classroom, two extra chairs were placed in the passages -- one in front of mine, one parallel to mine at the end of the other passage. A woman teacher who was about forty came in and greeted me by nodding her head. Then pupils started coming in too while they were singing. After all settled down at their seats and finished the song, a girl sang the first few words of a second song and called, "One, two, three." The whole class started to sing the second song in unison. The first song

praised the Chinese government for nurturing children nicely. The second was a song of an ethnic people in China who appreciated the unity of all nationalities in the country. I found that some of the classes visited in the primary schools in Daqing and Shuihua also sang songs while entering the classroom and must sing the first song.

At 10:10, the first of a double-period mathematics class began. No sooner did the class stand up and said, "How are you, teacher? How are you, guest?" than two other young teachers came in and took the spare seats. After the teacher said "How are you, class? Sit down," she held up her textbook and turned to the blackboard on which she wrote: "Lesson 9: Multiplication of multiple integers" and "236 x 52".

"Who can tell us how to do the calculation?" asked the teacher. Many hands were raised. She called one name. A pupil stood up and fluently said, "First, ... Secondly, ... Then, ... And finally, ..." etc. His answer was not only fluent but also precise and concise. It could not have been better. The teacher looked indifferent to this perfect answer. She just ordered him to sit down. As soon as she asked, "Who can do that again?" I looked at pupils sitting around me and a boy offered to share his textbook with me. Accidentally, I found a short paragraph in a page which read the same as the answer given by the previous pupil. He and the other pupil called recited a given answer.

"Now I want one of you to come out and solve the problem on the blackboard," said the teacher kindly. Again she pointed to one of the many pupils putting up their hand. A boy came out to the blackboard and finished the calculation quickly. He was about to return to his seat. "Hold it," the teacher said, "Now you tell the class the procedures for doing that." He took up a long wooden pointer and started explaining step by step how he had arrived at the sum total. After she told the boy to return to his seat, she wrote a similar mathematical problem on the blackboard. She named another pupil to do it. Similar situations like that described above were repeated.

"I want you to turn to page --, and read it carefully." the teacher commanded. "Then you join your neighbors to try to recite it." Not more than two minutes later, she asked pupils to answer. This time she was encouraging and said, "It'd be alright too if you make mistakes." The pupils' response was enthusiastic as ever. She called a few to answer. The answers were all the same because it was the logical steps of doing the multiplication with multiple integers that she wanted them to understand or memorize by heart.

The teacher went on to teach the pupils to check the sum of each calculation. "The best way of doing it is to reverse the multiplying numbers with numbers being multiplied and do the calculation again. You should get the same sum total. Why? Who knows?" the teacher asked. Only a

few pupils put up their hands. A girl was called and said "This is called the law of exchange." Again I found the answer was in the book.

Then the teacher asked the class to do at their seat two other problems she wrote on the blackboard. As soon as some pupils began to look up when they were finished, she named pupils to give answers. Then she asked, "Who has got a different answer?" Seeing a boy who had raised his hand, she said, "You must have made a mistake somewhere. Go through the calculation once again," but she did not even bother to go and look at his work.

"So-and-so, you come out and calculate the sum on the left, and so-and-so, you do the one on the right," She suddenly instructed a boy and a girl to come forward. In doing the exercise on the chalkboard, the boy could not write neatly. Instead of "1364", he wrote "1 36 4". The teacher erased it for him and told him to write the numbers at the right place. When both of them were finished, she asked, "Are the sums correct?" All said yes. Still she went through the calculation step by step with the class.

She went to her desk and took out a pile of thin, rectangular small blackboards.'[8]

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[8] The small blackboard was a popular instructional equipment in the primary school. It was a small piece of rectangular-shaped writing board, e.g. 50cm x 20cm. According to the teachers, they liked to use the small blackboard because they could prepare written materials like questions and supplementary exercises on it before class. So that time was saved for discussion or explanation in class.

"Starting from you," she pointed at a pupil sitting in the front and said, "each one answers one question." Then one by one she raised the small blackboards on which equations like the following had been written:-

32 x 3 =

25 + 25 x 3 =

99 + 99 x 9 =

....

....

etc.

Once the pupil sat down, the one behind stood up swiftly and shouted out an answer instantly. There were more than ten equations. Only one pupil could not give a right answer and two pupils were hesitant though their answers were also right.

This lesson ended at 10:40 and the second half continued ten minutes later. During the break, pupils remained quietly in the classroom while the teacher went out. When she came back after the bell rang, the class resumed with the greeting rituals again. Then the teacher continued with new exercises. They were essentially the same type of multiplication problems. The teaching methods and the mode of interaction between the teacher and her pupils were similar to what had happened before.

After four lessons, the school broke off for the morning at half-past eleven, and pupils bade the three teachers and me goodbye. It was lunch time, and most pupils

went home for lunch. About one-fifth of this class, however, had bought their lunch which was collected by the monitors and taken to a room where a non-academic staff member was to warm their lunches. On the other hand, a few parents were waiting at the school entrance for their children. Some went away on foot while some did so on bicycles.

The afternoon lesson commenced again after a break of one and a half hours. At one o'clock, I arrived once more at their classroom. The teacher and pupils were all there already. No sooner than I walked in, a command "stand up" was heard. Subsequently, the whole class of pupils stood up and said, "How are you, guest?" They sat down after I returned the greeting. I took the same seat as during the morning. Shortly afterwards, and surprisingly, a group of 12 people also arrived. It was really a big group for this crowded classroom. I was later told that most of them were teachers from other primary schools in Harbin. Two teachers and the headmistress of this school were also among this group. They went in and out to bring in some chairs. Some pupils at the back were told to give their seats to some teachers. These pupils moved forward to squeeze into their classmates' seats which were already crowded. It had taken a few minutes before this confusion subsided.

It was an art lesson. On everyone's desk, there were a textbook of many illustrations, a box of water paints, a few brushes and a piece of white drawing paper. The teacher was a woman about 45, wearing glasses. Without a word, she

pinned two pictures of golden fish and a piece of drawing paper on the blackboard. "They were imitations of two masterpieces of a famous painter. They should give you a feeling how to draw in a realistic manner the movements of fish," the teacher said kindly, referring to her duplications. She proceeded to demonstrate how to mix colors on her desk. Pupils at the back raised their heads high up to try to see it. Given the long but level floor of the classroom, I doubted if many pupils were tall enough to see it clearly.

Suddenly, she stopped and said, "You've read the chapter, haven't you? Did you have a chance to observe how a real fish swims? I have told you to do that. Only with observation will you be able to draw good pictures." Then she started to ask questions for about three minutes. All of them were about the basic skills of painting and mixing colors. As usual, pupils were called and stood up to answer. All the answers could be found in their textbook.

The real painting lesson began now. She took up a brush and started painting on the piece of drawing paper. She explained every stroke she made. In a relaxed manner, she quickly produced a beautiful sample. "Discuss with your group and analyze how I paint. Then you can start painting your own." Her words were taken only by a few pupils. Others were anxious to start. The teacher walked up and down. Sometimes she stopped at individual pupils' desks and, in a concerned manner, told them to do this and that.

A few minutes later, she came up to her own desk with two finished paintings by pupils. She showed them to the class. Furthermore, she explained what was good and what was inadequate in these pictures (see Appendix C, pictures 11 and 12). She seemed satisfied. Then she told pupils, "You can come out for a second piece of drawing paper if you have handed in the first one."

From time to time, she showed the class more finished paintings. Like before, she managed to find good and bad points in every work.

The class was dismissed in the usual manner. I was invited to the headmistress' office. The headmistress told me that the art teacher was a very qualified teacher and that was why such a large group of outside observers had been attracted. The observation of classes was coordinated by the office of education in their school district. She also told me that she had mentioned to the teacher to present to me as gifts the best works in that class. We went on with our interview for a couple of minutes and then the class monitor brought in a bag of art works. I felt guilty because I had to take away their "fruit" of hard work. The headmistress opened it and explained to me how she liked some of these best art works. I insisted I should at least return a copy to the pupils who had submitted two "masterpieces". She was surprised but agreed at last.

According to the time-table, there were no classes after the first lesson on Monday and Wednesday afternoon.

Instead, there were one and a half hours of extra-curricular activities. All pupils stayed on to take part in sports competitions, games, or class meetings (see Appendix C, pictures 13 and 14). There were no classes on Tuesday and Saturday afternoon. On Thursday and Friday, there were two lessons in the afternoon.

One last word about this typical day in the primary school: throughout the five lessons, noises from the window and the hallway in the school were constantly heard distinctly. Also heard were the sniffing sounds inside the classroom because it was cold inside too. It was also oberved that pupils who could not answer a question were ordered to stand at their seat for a few minutes or until they volunteered to give a correct answer.

5.1.3 Highlights on the Teacher-pupil Interaction -- another Chinese Language Class

To highlight the particular characteristics of primary education in Harbin today, another scene detailing the interactions between the teacher and pupils would not be redundant. It was a grade five Chinese language class. Again, the teacher was a woman. The topic she taught was Andersen's "The Match-Seller". She first told the pupils a little about Anderson and concluded that he was sympathetic to the working class. She spent five minutes in reading the text which was quite long (about 1500 Chinese characters).

Teacher(T): Are there any mistakes in my reading?

Class(C): No.

T: At what time of the year does the story happen?

Pupil(P)1: (After being called) New Year Eve.

T: Is the girl a poor girl?

C: Yes.

T: How do you know? There is not a word in the book saying that.

P2: It's New Year Eve. The weather is cold, but in the text it says that she has no shoes to put on. She's wearing sandals which belonged to her mom.

T: Do you wear sandals while going out in winter?

C: No.

T: Is the writer sympathetic to the poor?

P3: Yes. The writer uses the expression that "the carriages were dashing around" which means the rich people show no concern for the safety of the poor.

T: Good imagination. In the 19th century, the poor were oppressed. She (referring to the pupil who just answered) did a good job. All this is not in the book. You got to have imagination to understand that.

Then she asked the whole class to read the entire text in unison and softly. She showed two transparencies on the overhead projector. By asking pupils to look at the transparencies, she wanted them to visualize some parts of the scenes described in the text. She also asked them to underline phrases and sentences that they thought were related

to the central themes. Then she went on to question and answer again.

T: What does the girl see through the light of the match?

P4: ... ...

T: (Seemed unsatisified) Be specific. You've got to think.

P5: She sees a fireplace, a roast goose, a Christmas tree and her grandma.

T: Yes. That's right. We know they aren't real; they're just illusions. What would you like to say about the illusions?

P6: They are beautiful.

P7: Wonderful.

P8: Attractive.

Then she wrote on the blackboard explaining the relation between the match-selling girl's feelings and her illusions:

feeling cold	**a fire place**
feeling hungry	**roast goose**
having no joy	**X'mas tree**
having no love	**grandma**
at last, freezes to death	

Finally, she asked, "Why does the author say at the end of the story that the girl is going to a place of no pain, no hunger? Speak out. It'll be alright if your answer is wrong."

5.2 Some Important Socio-cultural Characteristics of Primary Education

From the above representations of the interactions in the lessons of grades three and five, a few cultural characteristics of primary education in Harbin can be drawn. First, classroom rituals were emphasized. To begin a lesson, the class must stand up and salute the teacher. This was repeated at the end of a lesson. More surprisingly, it was also required for the continuation of a lesson by the same teacher even after a short break. This and other rituals such as raising hand, standing up to answer, etc., were closely related to a more fundamental conception of schooling in the culture of the community: discipline.

Schooling in Harbin, as understood from the above representations, had at least two major functions. Besides acquisition of knowledge, primary pupils came to school to learn discipline, the kind of discipline that required them to be directed by the teacher (or the superior) to act in a situation with which they were actually familiar. In other words, as long as they remained in the classroom, they were conscious that the teacher was the "commander" of classroom activities. Subsequently, they talked softly and were not to be unrestrained even during the recess. As Kessen (1975: 217) noted, teachers there "had never seen a hyperactive child in school. Some children were occasionally 'lively' or 'naughty', but apparently not for long".

The idea of discipline was not only required for classroom order but also manifest in learning. Examples were those cases that pupils were required to give correct but neat answers like the teacher's. One most striking example, however, was that the mathematics teacher could not tolerate a pupil writing a correct answer in a care-free fashion. Instead of "1 36 4", she wanted the pupil to write "1364".

As regards the other function of education, namely, acquisition of knowledge, it was obvious that the teachers observed showed great concern in this respect. The teacher who finished reading a chapter of 1500 Chinese characters in a few minutes was a typical example. Her reading sounded in a rush though clear enough. She later told me that she always conducted class in a rushed manner because the grade five class had a tight schedule to finish this year. She also said, "If I can finish in less time the reading which is inevitable in teaching Chinese language, I can tell the class more things."

Coupled with the importance of discipline in the classroom, the concern for passing on more book knowledge to pupils was a dominant factor in the development of a pattern of teaching procedures which was oriented to familiarize pupils with the text. For this, repetitions of a task of a similar nature seemed sufficient. Therefore, it was seldom the case that the teacher would go beyond the text to encourage the pupils' to express their personal feeling of an issue in a thorough manner. Instead, teaching and

learning were directed by the concern for arriving at the right answers as soon as possible.

The idea of discipline and the concern for knowing more about the text pressed the teacher to urge the pupils to avoid making mistakes on the one hand, and legitimized (from the teacher's viewpoint) her "authoritative" manner in directing her pupils on the other. To the teacher, her authoritative tone was either justified or of secondary importance only. What was important was that the pupils had to get the right answer. Or, in the teacher's terminology, they must have learnt the lesson. As a result, when asking for an answer the teacher liked to say "Don't hurry but make sure you get the right answer." or "Your answer is clumsy.", etc.

That political education was diffused in extra-curriucluar activities as well as in the classroom teaching was another characteristic found in primary schooling in Harbin. The situation in which pupils sang songs praising the government was a typical example seen in the primary schools visited in the city and the province. In many lessons of Chinese language and even mathematics, teachers liked to relate their teaching to the glorification of the nation or dissemination of the dominant political ideas of the society although there was no explicit relationship between the text and her political teaching. In the case of the Chinese language teacher who taught the story of "The Match-Seller" to a grade five class, her statement that the poor were oppressed in the nineteenth

century came from her own political stand rather than from the text itself.

All this tends to confirm Montaperto's (1979: 2) observation that

> schools (in China) are viewed as but one feature of the larger society, and their role, apart from imparting factual knowledge, is both to inculcate the scoialist values of Chinese society and to reinforce the perceptions of collectivism gained by students in their daily lives.

Also, it was obvious that there was almost no independent learning in the classroom. Instead, pupils were expected to work at a pace set for all members of the class. Consequently, the slow learners were always neglected. At the same time, although the teacher asked pupils to discuss, a pupil's interaction with peers through discussion was very very short (a half to two minutes) because what she wanted actually was an answer close to the one she had in mind.

Finally, although teachers employed methods other than drilling, "question-and-answer" became "the state of the art" in the classroom today. For good or bad, this and the use of projector were regarded as the most 'advanced' methods among the better qualified and more confident teachers. As a teacher said in an interview, "According to the government official, teaching effectiveness increases 25 per cent because pupils can visualize what is being taught. So I should make the best use of the projector."

In Harbin, how did a confident primary teacher teach? As far as evidence showed, a confident teacher always conducted her class in an highly organized manner. First of all, she was very familiar with the text. Secondly, she was also very well prepared. The teacher who had all possible answers written on word cards before hand was a common phenomenon in the primary schools I visited. The word card and small blackboard were commonly used for supplementary teaching materials.

Thirdly, a confident teacher liked to encourage, at least verbally, pupils to ask questions in class although they were essentially straight-forward and factually-oriented questions. Also she encouraged pupils to conduct private-study, especially at home. For example, the grade 3 Chinese language teacher asked her pupils to look up the dictionary for difficult words, and the fine art teacher asked her pupils to observe the movement of a fish before coming to class.

5.3 Primary Teacher Education in Harbin

The objective of the following part of the chapter is to furnish a detailed account of the condition of primary teacher education in Harbin. Therefore, the rest of the chapter is divided into four parts: a) Harbin Normal School, b) the curriculum, c) normal school students, and d) normal school teachers. Not only is the present situation pertaining to these topics discussed, but their development over the past 36 years is also included. By doing this, we shall arrive at a comparative understanding of the quality of teachers trained in the early years of the regime and today. Subsequently, the development of primary teacher education is outlined.

5.3.1 Harbin Normal School

As pointed out before, there was only one full-time pre-service primary teacher training institute in Harbin. It was the Harbin Normal School. It was first established as a section of Harbin Teacher Training Specialized School (Harbin Shifang Zhuanke Xuexiao or Shizhuan) which was set up in 1947. Before 1980, this Shizhuan had two sections: one for junior middle school teacher training and the other for primary and kindergarten teacher training. The latter was referred to as the normal school.

In 1980, the normal school separated from the Shizhuan and became an institution on its own. Now, the school also had two sections; one to train primary school teachers, one

to train kindergarten teachers. In 1985, there were 369 students enrolled in the primary teacher training section which had eight classes; one class of year 4, two classes of year 3, two classes of year 2, and three classes of year 1. The class size ranged from 45 to 60 students. Currently, the year 4 class had 45 students. Furthermore, the structure of enrollment was determined by the school capacity. The assistant headmistress told me that one class of year 1 students would be enrolled the following year because only one class of students would be graduated in summer 1985.

I found the Harbin Normal School located in a fairly shabby building. Classrooms were small with classroom setting being somewhat similar to that in the primary school (see Appendix C, pictures 15 and 16). Most classrooms had two desk organs. They were for students to practise on during recess and lunch break. Except for physical education, most teaching was conducted in the home classroom. There were also a number of smaller rooms used as laboratories which were better equipped than those in the primary schools. Sometimes lessons which involved experimental work, such as doing a chemical experiment or examining the anatomy of a fish, were held in the laboratory (see Appendix 3, pictures 17 and 18). According to the students interviewed, about one third of the science lessons were conducted in this laboratory.

The school had a library which was so small that it was simply used as a book depository. Students could not enter

the library but submit call numbers for books! There were more than 100 kinds of magazines (all in Chinese) in the student reading room. From my quick look at the library and the reading room, it seemed to me that most of the reading materials there were of an entertainment nature rather than for professional reference.

With regard to the unsatisfactory physical condition of the school, the headmistress, who was a party member, complained (R=Respondent, Q=Researcher's question),

R: Not having enough rooms, some of our classes are therefore accommodated at the attached primary school and the Shizhuan. The dormitory is another problem. We hope we can have room for every student, as in the teachers' university. Now, it is mainly only those from the outer areas of the city who can live in the school. At the end of 1985 we shall move into a newly constructed building (see Appendix C, picture 19) which is sponsored by the World Bank, and thus will have all new teaching facilities. On the other hand, it will be better if the government will take away the section of kindergarten teacher education from the normal school, so that we can have more space to open new classes.

Q: Why is the dormitory so important in the normal school? Could students not live at home?

R: It has been a tradition of the normal school that students should live in the dormitory. In fact, it has a few advantages. The living condition of many of our

students' homes are very crowded, no space for revision of lessons at night. To live at school altogether helps cultivate good students because they eat and learn together. They eat at the school canteen. They go to their classroom for private-study from 7 till 9 every evening. There are student leaders in every class who help other students do assignments and solve emotional and behavioral problems.

Q: What kinds of problems do they have?

R: In these days, because of bad social influences, many of our students like to dress themselves provocatively, just like teenagers outside. Teachers and student leaders can talk to these students after school. You know, our students are going to be teachers in the primary schools. If they don't regard themselves as models for primary pupils, how can they teach them efficiently?

In the normal school, the class was an important unit which had the classmaster/classmistress as its leader. He/She was assisted by the monitor and student cadres who usually were members of the Communist Youth Organization. The class association, with its executive branching out into every aspect of a student's life, was supposed to orient effectively the behavior of students toward a desired pattern of which to study hard and be rid of the vanities of life were among the priorities. According to the headmistress, students should also be inculcated with the ideas of

collectivism and the habit of physical labor. Therefore, every student was obliged to help in cleaning up the school every Saturday afternoon.

The evening private-study session best illustrated the students' obligation to the pre-arrangements of their school life. In Daqing, where I observed three evenings of private-study in a normal school, the following is a chart of the usual activities of its students.

Individual	The Whole Class
Aristic paper-cutting	Ball game competition
Creative writing (poem, story, etc.)	Chess contest
Doing assignment	Concert
Discussion with classmates	Folk dance evening
Drawing	Speech contest, (e.g reciting poem, and story-telling, etc)
Going to the library	Movie night
Making note	Party
Memorizing text	Quiz
Practising calligraphy	
Practising piano (music room)	
Reading newspaper	
Reading reference	
Writing diary	
Writing personal letter	
Sleep	

According to students of Harbin Normal School, they had more or less the same kinds of activities in the private-study lesson, except they could not study in the school library. As a result, it was obvious that many of the things that could be done privately were also to be done in the private-study session. Ironically, students were not allowed to be absent though some of them were sitting there idle or having an evening nap.

The normal school was not only a place for collective activity but also a place where discipline had to be observed in a manner similar to the primary school. To begin every lesson, the whole class stood up to greet the teacher. Similarly, the whole class stood up again to be dismissed at the end of lesson. Wherever a student volunteered to respond to the teacher's question, he had to raise his hand and to be called on to do so.

A more explicit sign of discipline was the school regulations. At the entrance of the building there was a plaque on which was inscribed the Regulations for Normal School Students (National).

1. love the motherland and people; embrace socialism, following the leadership of the Communist Party of China;
2. study seriously Marxism-Leninism and the thought of Mao Zedong; develop the communist world view;
3. love children; study hard for the profession; be dedicated to primary education;
4. have high morality, be civilized and polite, honest and humble; be enduring and lead a simple life;
5. strengthen the body and be hygienic; take an active part in school activities;
6. respect teachers, unite with fellow-students, love collectivity, dare to criticize and self-criticize;
7. abide by school regulations, social morals, and state's ordinances;
8. care for the interest of the country and obey the need

of work (in job-allocation).

How effective the collective and self-sacrificing communist values can be on teenagers like normal school students in Chinese society today is an interesting question. Yet, at the time of my visit, I felt that the normal school's authority over its students was still unchallenged. On the two corners of the staircase, there were regulations for normal school students set up by the municipal bureau of education. These regulations prescribed, among many other things, that students were not allowed to wear earrings, religious crosses and clothes which the school would regard as wanton and the students at the normal school seemed to have complied with them.

To sum up, as a formal institution whose function was to supply academically qualified teachers to the primary school, the normal school in Harbin was also performing the task of inculcating in prospective teachers the dominant moral and political values of the society. For example, collectivism and subordination to authority were ardently underscored in the normal school life. At the same time, the prospective teachers were expected to be highly self-disciplined because they were regarded as the model for young children.

5.3.2 The Curriculum

To understand the qualitative aspect of teacher education in Harbin, it is certainly important to know in

greater detail its program of training in the normal school too.

Since the institutionalization of the three-year program of primary teacher education in 1952, the curriculum has concentrated on passing on basic knowledge to students. The reason is that normal school graduates are expected to have a fairly good knowledge of these subjects in order to teach them because the curriculum of the primary schools is essentially composed of these two subjects.

Before the Cultural Revolution, for fear that their graduates might not have a solid background in these subjects, most normal school teachers taught with the objective that the more information provided to students the better. There was little discussion between the teacher and students. Learning at that time, as the present assistant headmistress who was then a teacher of the normal school put it, "was relatively deadened because teaching emphasized memorization, either of texts or lecture notes."

Besides, there was a little learning of professional subjects like educational psychology and pedagogy. In the 1950's, the teaching of professional subjects in Harbin Normal School was rudimentary. Students were taught some basic concepts of psychology like: what is memory? where and how does it operate? Unfortunately, even this limited learning of educational psychology had to follow closely the mainstay ideology of the state. A teacher-educator who had taught educational psychology here since the 1950's lamented

the political interruption of her work.

> For some time after 1963, educational psychology was not taught in this school because the government spokesman denounced it as pseudo-science. It was thought to be a biased field of learning because it was promoted in capitalist countries. According to him, education in a socialist country like China should not follow the same practice. Therefore, we had to drop it from the curriculum. That meant I could not teach it to my students. I could only teach pedagogy.

As for pedagogy, schematic introduction of some prominent modern western educational thinkers like Pestalozzi, Froebel, Herbart and Dewey, etc., was made in the class before the Cultural Revolution, but more emphasis was placed on informing students of the government's educational ideal and endeavor, thus calling for their dedication to education.

If there was anything to which the special attention of normal school students was directed before the 1960's, it was the educational ideas of Soviet Union educators at that time. Two items throw light on this kind of influence. Copying the Russian model of teacher training, educational subjects apart from educational psychology were grouped together in one subject labelled as pedagogy: the science of education. (It is still the same today.) Secondly, ideas of Soviet educators like Kairov were uncritically, but widely,

accepted by Chinese teachers at that time. An older teacher of a primary school I visited described the situation.

> At that time, every teacher was familar with Kairov's name, if not his ideas. In the normal school, the teacher taught students the educational ideas of Kairov. Kairov's teaching method was teacher-centred. That meant the teacher lectured more and the class listened and kept in mind what the teacher said. By this method, it was believed that pupils would learn fast and more. Even teachers who hadn't gone to the normal school learnt this method from their own teachers. When they began teaching, they just followed suit.

Of course, the enthusiasm over the educational ideas of the Soviet Union disminished rapidly when the Soviet Union began to withdraw its aid to China in 1958.

Another important part of the curriculum was political study. Before the Cultural Revolution, it included subjects like Fundamentals of Darwinism and Elements of Social Science, and the Common Program'' which were geared towards assimilation of the basic tenets in Marxism-Leninism and the thought of Mao Zedong, and history of the Communist Party of China (*Almanac of China's Education* ,1984: 751).

''The Common Program was one of the three basic documents adopted in the Chinese People's Political Conference held in September 1949. This conference provided legitimacy for the new communist government in China. For detail, see Clubb, E. 1972: 301-308.

In 1980, a new four-year curriculum for the normal schools in major cities was drafted. It is illustrated in Fig. 5.1. In this new curriclum, the amount of political education in the normal school was greatly reduced. All subjects related directly to political education in the 1952 curriculum were cancelled. Instead, only one subject called "politics" was included in the present curriculum. Besides studying politics, normal school students were required to take part actively in the extra-curricular school activities which were planned by the Communist Youth League in the school. Every week they attended a meeting and were addressed by the vice-headmaster (branch party secretary in the school) on political education like understanding the current political convention in the country, reading and discussing politcal documents, etc.

On the other hand, the academic-learning oriented and professionally rudimentary curriculum of the normal school still prevailed in the new curriculum. For example, in the first two years students had 30 periods of class every week. Most of the time was spent on cultural studies; 23 periods in year 1 and 19 in year 2. In year 2, students started to learn educational psychology. In the years 3 and 4 curricula, emphasis was still on cultural studies like Chinese language, mathematics, and physics, etc. but students learnt professional subjects too. Pedagogy and methodology courses on teaching Chinese and mathematics were also taught to them.

Fig. 5.1 Four-year Normal School Curriculum

Subjects	Year				Total*	Percentage of Curriculum
	1	2	3	4		
Politics	2	2	2	1	239	6.20
Chinese Reading and Writing	5	5	4	4		
Fundamentals of Chinese Language	2	2	2	0	818	21.22
Teaching Primary Chinese Language				2	62	1.61
Mathematics	4	4	4		416	10.79
Teaching Primary Mathematics				4	124	3.22
Physics		3	3	4	328	8.51
Chemistry	4	3			246	6.38
Biology	4				144	3.74
Hygiene		2			68	1.76
History	3			3	201	5.21
Geography			3		102	2.65
(Foreign Language)**	(3)	(3)	(3)	(3)	(405)	
Psychology		3			102	2.65
Pedagogy			2	2	130	3.37
P.E. and Teaching Methods	2	2	3	3	335	8.69
Music and Teaching Methods	2	2	2	2	270	7.00
Art and Teaching Methods	2	2	2	2	270	7.00
(Teaching Primary Nature Study)**				(2)	(62)	
Classes Per Week	30	30	27	27	3,855	100
Weeks of Study Per Year	36	34	34	31		
Practicum (week)		2	2	6		
Productive Labor (week)	2	2	2			

*Total number of classes in four years.

**The normal school itself decides if it should be offered.

Source: *Almanac of China's Education*, 1984: 763.

Source: Taken from Beeby's *The Quality of Education in Developing Countries*, p.72.

Fig. 3 Corresponding Characteristics Between Primary Schooling and Teachers

A period in the normal school lasted 45 minutes, and the duration of the school year varied for different years. Year 1 had 36 weeks, and years 2 and 3 had 34. In addition, all these three years had a practicum of two weeks. Year 4 was different; 31 weeks of study and six weeks of practicum.

The form of practicum was interesting. In year 1, students took part in the extra-curricular activities in the primary school every other week.[17] In year 2, students went there to observe teaching. In year 3, they began to have teaching practice.

The final practicum in year 4 was very important; it affected the standing of the normal school because students were to be assessed by officials from the provincial department of education. The method of assessment was interesting too. Based on their academic achievements in these four years, graduating students of Harbin Normal School were classified as the better, the average, and the not-so-good. Five students from each category were to be evaluated although every student had the chance to do teaching practice.

Closely related to the curriculum was the problem of the textbook. As in other levels of education, textbooks used in the normal school were decided by the central government. Before, the normal school used the same textbooks as the senior middle school. After 1977, in order

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[17]In the standard national curriculum, there was no practicum for first year students. It was the requirement of the Harbin Normal School only.

to develop primary teacher education more efficiently, the government gathered experts in the field to publish a set, and the only set, of textbooks for the normal school. To date, textbooks of more than 10 subjects have been published. It was the government's plan that the whole set will be completed by 1987.

In sum, the curriculum of primary teacher education in Harbin was geared to political education and making up the academic preparation of the prospective teachers. As a result, education in professional knowledge was scant. Even worse, the organization of curriculum directed students' attention chiefly to the textbook. Coupled with the poor facilities of the school library, this seriously limited the students' scope of study to the textbook and the teacher's lecture. From the 45 questionnaires collected from the graduating class, 30 per cent of the students said they had seldom or never read an education journal. Among the 50 per cent of students who sometimes (but not often) read an education journal, none had read a foreign journal. Finally, it should also be noted that in a communist society like China, dissemination or refutation of educational ideas was always government directed, e.g., the learning of the Soviet's pedagogical ideas in the 1950's and the cancellation of psychology from the curriculum in the early 1960's.

The quality of teacher education is not only related to its curriculum and the nature of training but also to the

quality of the prospective teacher -- the normal school student. Therefore, we must now look more closely at the student body itself.

5.3.3 Normal School Students

According to the informants interviewed, Harbin Normal School had no great problems in enrolling qualified candidates for training before the Cultural Revolution because the places in the normal school were few and junior middle education was in the process of stable expansion in Harbin since the 1950's. As recalled by people who were at that time involved in primary teacher education, the normal school was a joyous place to learn. A teacher-educator I interviewed said,

> I was graduated from the teachers' university nearby and came to teach at this school in 1953. I taught pedagogy and educational psychology courses. I was of almost the same age as some older students in my class because some overaged students of equivalent qualification were also enrolled. They respected me and treated me like a big sister. They learnt seriously and studied hard. Compared to students today, they were highly self-disciplined. I was a classmistress, but I need not waste time on discipline problems. That made you really want to teach thoroughly. Sometimes, I spent 16 hours with them or preparing lessons. I wouldn't feel tired at

that time. To tell the truth, I enjoyed and my students enjoyed studying here too.

A present primary teacher recalled her experience in the normal school. She had completed the junior middle school and entered immediately for teacher education in 1956. She graduated in 1959. She said,

> I decided to study at the normal school because I was impressed by my primary school teachers. When I was in middle school, I always missed my primary school teachers. They were excellent people and I told myself I wanted to be like them.
>
> Also, I felt it was an honour to be a teacher. My parents always talked to me about that. Thinking back, I now feel people at that time looked at you with a different attitude when they knew you were a teacher, even a primary teacher. They admired you.

That primary school teacher's feeling coincided with that of the teacher-educator who was previously quoted.

(R=Respondent; Q=Researcher's question)

R: In those days, people respected us as teachers. People in society believed it was good to educate people and to help social development. We felt proud of ourselves because teaching was regarded as an honorable occupation. This was especially true for girls. That's why it was a common practice in those days for the middle schools in Harbin to mobilize their graduates to enter the normal school. After the Cultural Revolution,

it was a different story.

Q: How did the Cultural Revolution affect your work?

P: For some time during the Cultural Revolution, we came to our office every day and got paid, but we were doing nothing except reading newspaper and political documents. We felt sorry for ourselves. What else could we do in those days? Later, we began teaching again, but discipline was a big problem at that time. Because of the radical policy, we teachers didn't have authority over students in the classroom. Even if you rebuked them, you would be criticized. They put up big character posters to attack you as capitalist roaders or reactionaries.

Q: What did the Cultural Revolution do to teacher education?

R: It was a long story, but I can tell you that now fewer outstanding students like to apply to the normal school. The quality of the students in our school today is not as good as before. They lack knowledge of the basic studies. This is because they didn't have a good primary education as a result of the Cultural Revolution. Worse, people in society do not respect teachers as much as before. The government is trying to reverse this trend, but it is not very successful yet.

Regarding the enrollment policy after the Cultural Revolution, candidates for training in the normal school had to go through an examination and interview. The examination

included seven subjects. They were Chinese, mathematics, English, political study, physics, chemistry, and biology. (Examination marks of English and political study were not counted for the application. They were just for reference.)

From interviews with people concerned with teacher education in Harbin, I also found that junior middle school graduates would like to apply to the normal school for four practical reasons. First, although each student could state two preferences concerning the various types of middle schools he wished to enter, he could not choose both key-point middle school and normal school at the same time. In other words, the student had to decide at grade nine either to take the academic route to excel in the highly competitive university entrance examination or to be prepared for a teaching job. Secondly, it was extremely difficult to get into a key-point senior middle school, and the chance for students from ordinary senior middle schools to enter the university was slight. Thirdly, job opportunity for a senior middle school graduate was very limited whereas as a teaching post was guaranteed for every normal school graduate. Fourthly, to study at the normal school would reduce very much one's family's financial burden because tuition and accommodation were free there. The last, but not least, important reason was that there was a monthly stipend of 23.5 yuan which could cover most of the living costs of a student.

I conducted a simple survey on the cost of living of normal school students. They were a class of year 2 students in Daqing, the oil city of the province, which was located 169 kms. from Harbin. They were asked how much on the average they needed from their family to support their life as normal school students.

Fig. 5.2 Pocket-money Needed by Students

Pocket-money Needed Monthly	Number of Students
0 -- 5 yuan	0
5 -- 10 yuan	6
10 -- 15 yuan	11
15 -- 25 yuan	11
Over 25 yuan	2

(Seven students did not respond)

A senior middle school student certainly needed greater financial support from his family.

As the assistant headmistress and other teachers in the normal school told me, the job security and the stipend system were two attractive benefits to two groups of teenagers. They were girls from families of city dwellers who still thought that modest education for girls was enough and young people from the countryside near the city. In fact, they were the dominant groups of students in the normal school today. With regard to their academic quality, a teacher-educator I interviewed said,

> I had taught for almost 30 years in the middle school, mainly in a key-point senior middle school, I enjoyed my job there. I applied to come here in 1981. The standard of students in the normal school was not as high as that of the key-point middle school students, it is not low either, but teaching here is not so high-strung because we are not preparing students for the university entrance examination. We don't feel the pressure of the public examination.

But the assistant headmistress and two teachers in the normal school I interviewed complained that now it was difficult to motivate their students to study hard because normal school students did not need to write any public examination.

In summary, although the status of primary teachers was esteemed in the early years of the regime, the normal school in recent years has had to count on the less capable junior middle school graduates as candidates for training. On the other hand, realizing that the quality of the candidates for training is critical of the quality of primary teacher education, the Chinese society has developed some mechanisms that have enabled the normal school to enroll some above average junior middle school graduates as candidates for training. The job-security and stipend system have been two of the most attractive benefits to normal school students.

5.3.4 Highlights on Student Teaching

How well were prospective teachers prepared for their job? The following are highlights of classes given by student-teachers. The first one was a Chinese language class. The student-teacher was a male about 20 years old.

T: Children, we are going to learn chapter 22 "Young Boy Runtu" (Teacher wrote the four Chinese characters of the title on blackboard). "Young Boy Runtu" is an excerpt from Lu Xun's (1881-1936, a very famous Chinese writer) short story "My Home Town". This section of the story is about "my" memory of a young boy whose name is Runtu (meaning enriched soil). You have prepared the lesson at home. Now, turn to question number three of the exercise on the book, and explain how the text should be paragraphed.'*

P1 I think paragraph one in the text is the first paragraph; paragraphs two and three are second, paragraphs four and five are third; starting from ... to ... is the fourth. The last paragraph in the text is also the last paragraph of the story.

T: Are there different opinions? (Looking round) No. ... I agree to his paragraphing. Did you come across any difficult terms or phrases when you were preparing the lesson at home?

'* This was a common methodology used in Chinese Language lessons in both the primary school and the normal school. According to a normal school teacher, it was a technique which aimed at training students to rearrange the text in a more related manner. At the same time, the teacher would know if students understood the text or not.

P2: ... ...

P3: ... ...

(After explaining the meaning of those terms raised by P2 and P3, the student-teacher started reading the text.)

T: Now you read the first paragraph in the text silently. Think while you're reading. See what kind of picture you'll get.

(The whole class started reading softly)

T: (A few minutes after) Who can tell us what he has got from the reading?

P4: I think it is like this: On a night with a full-moon, I see a piece of land where water-melons are grown. A boy is standing there, protecting the produce from the animals which will eat it up. He is holding a long iron fork.

T: Who else can supplement?

P5: I think it is a summer evening ... . Because of the moonshine, there you see the field at the seaside.

T: After listening to two fellow pupils' opinions, what do you think now?

P6: (Referring to P4) His description is concrete and full of images. That gives me a vivid picture.

T: Now let's take a look at a transparency (He showed a transparency on the projector, showing a young boy who is hunting an animal.) This is the Runtu in "my" impression. Now please read softly the second paragraph and think of the following questions.

The student-teacher took out a handy, small blackboard on which the following questions had already been written:-

a. **What is the relationship between "I" and Runtu?**

b. **Why does Runtu come to "my" home?**

c. **Why am I excited to know that Runtu is coming?**

T: (After a few minutes) Who can answer question 1?

P7: ... ...

T: Who can answer question 2?

P8: ... ...

.....

T: (After inviting pupils to answer the questions) Are there any other problems in reading this chapter? (Time was just up.) When you go home, recite the text.

Unlike the last one, the following is a scene of a mathematics class taught by another student-teacher who was a female. To begin the lesson, the student-teacher presented a quotient to a class of year 4 pupils and asked them to reduce it.

$$\frac{1 + 3/4}{1 - 1/4}$$

She called a pupil to complete the calculation on the blackboard. When the pupil returned to the seat, the teacher wanted him to explain the whole process again.

Answers were required to be precise and concise. For example, the teacher asked a pupil to explain the above type of calculation. The pupil responded by detailing the

process: first, to change 1+3/4 to 7/4, and 1-1/4 to 3/4; then multiply the factor 7 by 4 ...

The teacher said, "It is too clumsy. Can somebody give another answer?"

A pupil put up his hand quickly and was called. He said, "First simplify, then add and substract."

"Simplify what?" asked the teacher.

The pupil replied, "Simplify double fractions into simple fractions." The teacher seemed satisfied.

There were a few similarities between the classes by the student-teachers and those by the in-service teachers reported before. For example, like the in-service teachers, the student-teachers also liked to use the question-and-answer method which aimed at encouraging personal opinions and inviting pupils to ask questions. Time for this, however, was always short. Secondly, reading the text by the teacher or pupils was regarded as fundamental in a language class. Both the student-teachers and the in-service teachers seemed to be convinced that, without recitation and memorizing, pupils would not learn well. Thirdly, the class was conducted in a highly-disciplined manner. Like the in-service teachers, the student-teachers were the centre of the learning activities. They also required that the pupils be both attentive and responsive.

It would be, however, unfair to say that every normal school graduating student was following entirely the in-service teachers. A graduating student told me that he

submitted his lesson plan to an in-service teacher for approval before the practicum. The in-service teacher accepted his new ideas in the lesson plan. He confessed,

> In teaching classical poems teachers like to explain word by word and pupils like to recite the poems without much understanding. My teaching method was not like that. I wanted the pupils to understand, to feel like the poet. Therefore, I outlined the background of the poem, using a sketch map to show the locations of the places mentioned in the poem. I also explained to the class the general social condition at that time. I think they could find out for themselves the underlying meaning of the poem.

Also the students-teachers were relatively more courteous and less prohibitive. For example, the student-teachers liked to say "thank you" and "please be seated" to the class, which was not very common among primary school teachers.

5.3.5 Normal School Teachers

One last important factor affecting the quality of primary teacher education is the teacher educators themselves. What kind of qualifications did they have relative to their predecessors? What was a class like in the normal school?

Before the Cultural Revolution, there were a considerable number of shizhuan graduates and graduates of the teachers' university teaching in the normal school. These shizhuan graduates were senior middle school graduates who enrolled in a three-year program of teacher education. In other words, their total years of education were just one year less than university graduates. They were trained to be junior middle school teachers. Among these shizhuan graduate teachers, some had taught in the senior middle school before they applied to transfer to the normal school.

One last category of primary teacher educators was those who had only completed a normal school education. Initially, they were trained to teach primary pupils but they ended up teaching prospective primary teachers. This was largely a result of an acute shortage of university students in the country. According to a government official I interviewed, the economy of Harbin in the 1950's and the early 1960's was under rapid development. Job opportunities in the modern sector were favorable. The demand for senior middle school and university graduates in the expanding modern sector was much greater than its supply. Consequently, the normal school could not count on enough university or shizhuan graduates. Therefore, some outstanding graduates of its own were enlisted to teach, but the number was limited. For example, one of the two assistant headmistresses was a graduate of the normal school. She had been teaching educational and political

subjects and was a party member.

After the Cultural Revolution, only two kinds of teachers were recruited to Harbin Normal School: graduates from the teachers' university and experienced senior middle school teachers who might or might not have a university degree. No graduates of the normal school were recruited any longer. Furthermore, in order to raise the quality of teacher education, the normal school now encouraged teachers with no university degree to undertake further studies in the correspondence university. On the other hand, a young teacher without a university degree found it difficult to gain promotion in the normal school.

To sum up, the qualifications of the teacher educators in the normal school had been varied academically. As a result of the underdevelopment of higher education in the country, the normal school even enlisted its alumni to teach. So, although the qualification of teacher educators had been raised, their generally low quality remained a chronic hindrance to further development. As the assistant headmistress of the normal school complained,

> Now we do not have enough university graduate teachers. We need at least four teachers who know and can teach pedagogy and educational psychology courses, but we have only one. We wish we could conduct some research on primary pupils. Now we have to wait a few years, perhaps.

5.3.6 A Day in a Normal School Class

Now let us take a look at the learning activities of a class in the normal school which provides us with an understanding of the mode of interaction between the teacher and students.

It was a second year class in the Harbin Normal School. The first lesson started at eight o'clock in the morning, but I was also told that every day there were twenty minutes of private-study before it. It was a Tuesday and the first class was a double-period class of psychology. The teacher who graduated from the city's teachers' university in the early 1950s had taught this subject ever since except during the Cultural Revolution.

I followed her to the class where I found a vacant seat for myself. Some students were smiling, but unlike primary pupils, they did not formally greet me. The classroom was simply equipped. Besides the chalkboard and the teacher's seat, there were two desk organs and two maps. There were also a few decorations, e.g. six frames of awards, a bulletin board, and three posters. The most noticeable decoration was a slogan on a red paper strip hanging across the back wall. It said, "Loyal To The Party's Educational Endeavor". This class had 49 students -- 40 girls, nine boys.

The lesson began with the same classroom rituals that were observed in the primary school, but I was the only one observing the class. The teacher started by asking, "Do you

still remember what we learnt last time?" No response. She ordered them to open the book and turn to a page. She read a short paragraph which described the characteristics of good memory. She then explicated word by word, sentence by sentence. When she was finished, she asked some short questions. Unlike the primary school lesson, very few students volunteered to answer. At the same time, she referred them to a certain passage in the page for the answer. After she named students to answer, she summarized the lesson so far by putting down on the blackboard the main points one by one. Her handwriting was very neat.

When she returned to the book, she read a paragraph related to the characteristics of the memory of school children. "Therefore, your teaching must be stimulating, so that the objectives of teaching will be fulfilled." she said without looking at the book.

After lecturing for ten minutes, she stopped and started asking short questions again. As soon as the question was answered, she proceeded to either ask another question or lecture or read a passage. "Do you have the characteristics described above? Do you find yourself to be a person who learns fast but also forgets quickly?" she pointed at a student. The boy stood up right away and replied with a smile, "It always takes me a long time to memorize something. On the other hand, I forget it too soon." The whole class broke into laughter.

"Why did you say that?" she asked.

The student said " ...."

"You are not that bad. What you have said about yourself means your ability to remember things is not poor," she encouraged him.

Then she used personal experiences like observations of her children and examples of nationally famous athletes to elaborate different kinds of learning experiences. When she stopped, she asked students to read some paragraphs from the book. Then she asked them to summarize these paragraphs. Also, she asked students to discuss the questions with their neighbors, but the students were not enthusiastic.

The lesson ended at 9:45 and resumed after ten minutes break. Unlike the primary school, there were no greeting rituals in between a double-period lesson. After the break, the second-half of this double-period lesson proceeded in a way essentially like that described above.

Some last observations about these two psychology lessons: Generally speaking, most students were sitting still and seemed to be listening attentively, but only two or three students made notes of what she said. Two students placed their head on the desk, as if taking a rest. One was reading a song book. Unlike the primary school class, neither a question nor a point for clarification was raised by students. The teaching proceeded from one section to the next in accordance with the textbook. I later asked a student how she liked this class.

I like the Chinese language teacher better. She is more stimulating, but I know this subject (psychology) will be useful in my future job. I wish I could know more about children.

There was a break of 25 minutes. Students might or might not go out. Volley-ball was the only sport played in the playground during this break. Most students just walked around in pairs and talked. A few students practised organ in the classroom.'' Five minutes before the lesson resumed, the school bell rang. All students lined up and started doing exercises as in the primary school. They were led by a teacher.

At 10:05, all students went back to class again. It was a Chinese language class. The teacher was a man who graduated from the teachers' university three years ago. He was around 30. As soon as he entered the classroom, all students stood up and said, "How are you, teacher?" He responded affectionately.

The topic that day was about the career of a Chinese communist educator. To start, he asked a girl student to read from the beginning. The girl mispronounced a few characters. Every time, he corrected her. After reading three paragraphs, she was told to sit down. To finish reading this long chapter, the teacher asked four students to read. This

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''Owing to the limited number of organs available to every class on the one hand and music was a compulsory subject for second year students on the other, the organs were always being used by students before class, during recess and lunch time, and the evening private-study lesson.

took more than 30 minutes.

"How do you paragraph this chapter?" he asked. A few students raised their hand. One was called to answer.

"Starting from ... .," the student said.

"You should stand up when you answer a question," the teacher said unresentfully.

The student stood up and continued with his answer.

"Into how many paragraphs do you think the chapter can be organized? What are their themes?" the teacher asked again.

After a few students were called to give answer, he gave his own and asked students to compare it with theirs.

The class stopped at 10:50 for a break. Surprisingly, the class stood up and said again "How are you, teacher?" when he returned to the classroom. "Do you think that the themes I have suggested are better for paragraphing and reorganizing the text?" he continued from where he had stopped. Some students said yes, a few not. They all stood up and gave reasons to support their opinions.

"You don't have to fully agree with me, but my themes will help you," he said and proceeded to read the first paragraph. When it was finished, he put down his book on the desk and wrote a few terms on the chalkboard. He reminded the students not to miswrite these characters. Then he summarized the meaning of this parargrph.

He did not read every paragraph but skipped some. He reminded students of the writing of some difficult

characters in every paragraph he read. He summarized these paragraphs too. I found that a student sitting at the corner had fallen asleep.

"Are there any more questions about this chapter?" he asked as he looked around. Nobody raised a hand. "If not, who will volunteer to tell a story of your own or report something interesting you saw recently. It can be a piece of news or a T.V. program." Uneasily, a boy stood up and started his account. When he was finished, a girl stood up. Though more uneasily, she started her story.

Later the teacher told me he believed this method of recounting one's experiences would improve the students' communication ability in future teaching. School was dismissed for lunch from 11:45 to 12:50 in the afternoon. All students went to the school dining hall for lunch.

In the afternoon, the first two lessons were on chemistry. When I arrived at the laboratory, the teacher and students were already there. Everyone put on a white lab gown. The teacher who was a woman about 50 had taught in a key-point middle school until recently, she had graduated from a shizhuan. When she saw me she stopped and led me to a seat near her table. The laboratory was smaller than a regular classroom; therefore, it was extremely crowded. A group of four to five students shared a square table covered with clay tiles. There was a water tap and a alcohol burner on every table.

After explaining and singling out the objectives of these two lessons, the teacher told the class to start doing an experiment. She talked to me for a few minutes, then she started walking around and helped students to conduct their experiment, if necessary. Otherwise, she just watched them and made suggestions.

An hour after the lesson began, she asked students to report the experiment results for their group. She questioned some of them, wanting to make sure that they really understood the experiment. She was not satisfied with the result of one group. "This group has to do it again," she ordered. "The others can go back to the classroom. I want two other groups to remain and help clean up the place. This and that group," she said kindly but also firmly.

The last period that day was a physical education lesson, and in the playground, students were divided into a few lines. After doing some warm-up exercises, the teacher, a man about 40 years old, began to lecture. A few minutes later he demonstrated some more difficult exercises and asked every student to follow him. He repeated his demonstrations a few times and then walked around to correct the movements of individual students when they could do the exercise themselves. He was patient to make sure the student could perform exactly a certain movement, despite the student's embarrassment of not being able to do it.

At 3:25, the school program ended for the day.

From the representations above, it is not difficult to notice that the style of teaching and learning in the normal school was pretty patternized. Reading and explicating the text by the teacher and students, question-and-answer on straight-forward topics, and summarizing the text, etc. seemed to be the dominant methods of teaching. Because of the reading-the-text approach to teaching, stimulations of study from the teacher became highly incidental. For the science subjects, experiments were conducted on a group basis. Also, more science lessons were conducted in the oral approach rather than the do-it-yourself approach.

In this chapter, many important representations (general and specific) concerning the organization of primary schooling and teacher education in Harbin have been reported. It should serve as a useful prelude to the discussion in the next chapter.

6. Primary Education and Teacher Qualities in Harbin Viewed Within and Without the Beeby Model

6.1 The Qualitative Aspect of Primary Education in Harbin

Let us now consider where the primary schools and the primary teacher education in Harbin presently stand according to the Beeby model of edcational development which we discussed in Chapter 3.

To begin, it seems useful to classify schooling characteristics again with the stages of education development in the Beeby model. This classification is presented in Fig. 6.

The two primary schools which I visited in Harbin displayed a number of characteristics which are to be found at Stages II and III of the Beeby model. First of all, primary schools in Harbin were highly organized; primary education was clearly divided into six years and primary schools were directly run by the government. As people there said, schools "belong to the the state". As far as the administration was concerned, the National Ministry of Education delegated its power to the provincial department of education which, in turn, further decentralized the administration of schools to the local government, i.e. the city. As a result, the municipal bureau of education allocated funds and teaching personnel to individual primary schools based on the standard rate of allocation set up by the central government. According to an official interviewed, very few primary schools in Harbin could really

Fig. 6 Five Major Aspects of Primary Schooling in the Beeby Model and the Stage of Development of Chinese Schools

Stage	Organization of Schools	Curriculum	Teaching Strategies	Teacher-pupil Interaction	Form of Assessment
I	Schools fairly unorganized.	Curriculum content very narrow -- confined mainly to the 3R's.	Work consists mainly of symbols that are taught without meaning. Pupils have to memorize information without understanding it.	Very formal.	Pupils ability to regurgitate information in response to teacher generated questions.
II	Schools are highly organized. Discipline tight and externally imposed.	Emphasis on 3R's continues. Syllabus still rigid and the textbook material which is available is still very limited. Usually there is only one textbook available.	Teaching methods continue to be rigid with only "one best way" to present materials. The symbols which are learnt still have limited meaning to children. Memorization still the key approach to learning.	Teacher-pupil relationships still very formal. The emotional and creative life of the child is ignored. The discipline still remains tight and external.	External examination and external inspections stressed.
III	Less rigidity and more efficiency in organization as schools advance to Stage III.	Syllabus becomes less restrictive and somewhat broader as schools move to Stage III. There is increasing availability of textbooks.	As schools move to Stage III while the goals and approaches remain much the same there is more efficiency in work and increasing emphasis on meaning.	There are gradual changes which become noticeable as schools move to Stage III.	Teacher begins to play a role in examination though external assessment still dominates school work.
IV	Less formality and rigidity in the overall organization and relationship among staff and between staff and pupils. Some schools becoming quite relaxed.	Curriculum becomes much wider and there is a greater variety of content. More textbooks become available. Also schools build up or extend their own libraries.	Greater range of teaching methods used with activity and problem-solving approaches encouraged. More stress on pupils' individual differences and creativity. Meaning and understanding of materials taught heavily stressed.	Teacher-pupil relationships less formal. Good relationship sought with pupils' parents. Discipline is relaxed and positive. Total development of the child stressed.	Internal assessment becomes more important in evaluating students' performance.

↓ The stage of development of Chinese primary schools.

get their share due to insufficient funds. The bureau of education, however, inspected the teachers by observing their teaching from time to time.

Within the school, the headmistress exerted fairly total control of all matters including the assessment of the work of the teachers. Sometimes, she or her delegate sat in the class and recorded the lesson in detail. Like the officials, when she found an outstanding lesson, she recommended other teachers to go to observe the work of this teacher or discuss her lesson plan. Also the headmistress helped organize teachers of the same subject to prepare lessons together in a group. In Daqing and Shuihua, it was found that the headmistress of the primary school sometimes gave tutorials to teachers who were not familiar enough with the subject matter they taught! In one case, the headmistress of a primary school I visited in Shuihua even had the authority to require a teacher to practise hand-writing under the guidance of another teacher. In other words, owing to the varied and low qualifications of teachers, the headmistress who was always more qualified and experienced in teaching wielded the authority to direct the less qualified tachers in their job.

To sum up, one can say that primary schools in Harbin were directly under the control of the local bureau of education to which the heads of the school were responsible. The government officials and headmistresses were the centre of authority in the schools. As a result, teachers'

involvement in the administration of the school was secondary.

Secondly, not only was the primary school system itself highly organized but so was its curriculum. Primary schools in Harbin adopted a rigid syllabus which was translated into a series of standard textbooks. As a rule, every subject had one prescribed textbook which was published by the government. In addition to the textbook, there was also a teacher's manual for every subject. The manual helped the teacher to understand the text, guided her to grasp the themes or basic concepts of each chapter, and provided her with questions and answers to be used in class. In fact, it was the teacher's most important single reference.

According to a teacher I interviewed, by studying the manual she was able to acquire sufficient information for teaching the topic. Another teacher who had recently completed in-service training at the Institute for Teachers of Further Studies explained to me how she used her manual. (R=Respondent; Q=Researcher's question)

Q: Could you tell me how you use the teacher's manual?

R: Besides the textbook, it is the first reference I read when preparing a lesson. After I go through the text book I always read the manual carefully. It tells me what the main points are and makes me understand the textbook better. If it is nature study, I can follow the examples in the manual when I do experiments with the pupils.

Q: Does your school have all the necessary apparatus for the experiments?

R: Of course not, but we don't have to do each experiment in every lesson. We just do one or two occasionally.

Q: What happens if there is something you don't know in the manual? Are there other references you can use?

R: I think so but I seldom use them because we can discuss the problems in the group preparation.

Q: Can you tell me more about the group discussion?

R: Teachers of the same subject meet from time to time. We can ask other teachers who have taught the topics before to solve the problems. Some teachers may have a lesson plan already. If I find it is better than mine, I can use theirs.

The following is an example of what the teacher's manual was like.

> It is the manual of year 3 nature study. The topic is on expansion and contraction of liquid, gas, and physical objects. The content of this chapter (in the manual) is divided into four parts. The first part is the objectives. The second part is a detailed explanation of the text in the textbook. The third part is something like a lesson plan which suggests not only problems to be tackled in class but also activities and teaching skills for this topic. Finally, it provides a detailed description of how related experiments should be

conducted (e.g. equipment and procedures) and the conclusion of these experiments. It is three to four times the length of the text in the textbook.[20]

As for the pupils, there was little provision of supplementary readers or workshops taking them beyond the official syllabus. Subject matter was largely confined to the 3R's although scientific and social knowledge was also taught.

Thirdly, and closely related to the rigid curriculum, was the style of learning. To a large extent, memorization was heavily stressed in learning because the class sizes were always large, the syllabus was heavy, and the external examination[21] imposed pressure on teachers whose teaching was accordingly geared to the examination requirements. All these factors, coupled with those pointed out in chapter five (for example, the conceptions of discipline and passing on more knowledge to pupils) made teacher-pupil dialogue, class discussion, and the so-called discovery of meaning by pupils difficult or superficial.

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[20]This is my summary of the text of a chapter in *Teacher's Manual of Nature Study*, vol. 1:79-87.

[21]Besides the mid-term and final examinations in the school, the most important examination was the graduation examination at the end of grade six. Pupils had to pass this examination with high marks before they were eligible to sit for the second round of examination which selected the best pupils for the key-point junior middle school. But the top 30 per cent of graduates in key-point primary schools would be admitted to key-point junior middle schools without taking the second round of examination.

Recently, in response to the national educational reform movement, many teachers in the primary schools were beginning to pay more attention to new teaching methods. It was, however, easier said than done. Very often, many enthusiastic teachers tended to adopt the currently government-advocated methods, but individual innovations were rare. For example, teachers regarded the use of the overhead projector and group discussion as the most effective teaching methods, but without genuine concern for their effectiveness.

The use of the question-and-answer method by primary teachers in Harbin is a good example to show that enlightened teaching methods were not successfully employed. Methodologically, the question-and-answer method has at least two functions; a) to enable the pupil himself to discover the meaning of the problem, and b) to deepen the meaning of a pupil's understanding of the problem through dialogue with the teacher. In western societies, it is also called the Socratic or dialectic method which recognizes the learner's contribution in search of the right answer. Thus, the advantages of this method are best seen in a small class which gives the teacher more time to conduct dialogue with each pupil. Generally speaking, the teacher should not be preoccupied with her own answer.

What I observed of this method in Harbin was generally superficial and the beneficial outcome of teaching, for the class or the individual, was highly questionable. Given that

there were 60 pupils in each class and the teacher usually had a tight schedule to cover in every lesson, the teacher always seemed impatient with answers that were not close to hers. Even worse, the teacher tended to call on those pupils who more closely followed her views so that the lesson could proceed smoothly. Consequently, there were always a group of pupils who were repeatedly called to answer questions while 40 to 50 per cent of the class never got a chance to do so.

In this respect, I recorded the distribution of callings in 22 classes. In some cases, 57 per cent of pupils were called but the percentage dropped to 35 in other cases. The following is a concrete example from my field notes.

> It is a double-period class of grade five Chinese language from 8:50 to 10:30 in the morning. In between the two periods, there is a break of 10 minutes. The class has 62 pupils. The teacher is a woman.
>
> In the first lesson, the teacher calls pupils 43 times to answer questions, but actually only 26 pupils are called because 10 pupils are called more than once. Some are called as many as four times. As a result, only 42 per cent of pupils have a chance to take part directly in this class.
>
> Interestingly enough, pupils are also called on 43 times in the second lesson. But this time, 29 different pupils are called which is 47 per cent of the class. Putting the two lessons together, only a

total of 40 different pupils are called during the two lessons. Although a few pupils are called as many as six times, there are 22 pupils (over one-third of the class) not called. Among these 22 pupils, some have not put up their hand while many just have not been lucky enough to be called. Both groups, however, look somehow isolated from the class. From their faces, I can tell that some pupils even feel frustrated. There seems no mechanism in the school to avoid that yet.

The use of the question-and-answer method which was generally regarded in China as the discovery method was spreading. The problem was that the teacher could not respond like a resource person through dialogue with pupils. Instead, her dialogue with them simply appeared as a cross-checking of answers.

Fourthly, the emotional life of pupils was not much regarded, e.g. a teacher could rebuke a pupil in an authoritative manner like "Your answer is clumsy, who can do better?". But many teachers began to be encouraging by saying "It'd be alright even you answer wrongly.", "Yes, correct. Who can make it shorter?", and "Thank you, please sit." Moreover, it should also be pointed out that the primary schools I visited had begun to launch extra-curricular activities which were geared to cultivating pupils' hobbies and non-academic talents, besides the political education activities.

Fifthly, the last important aspect regarding schooling characteristics was the assessment issue. In Harbin, pupils were required to write at least two term examinations each year. Pupils who failed in these examinations would not be promoted. At the end of year 6, all pupils sat for the junior middle school entrance examination run by the municipal bureau of education. In 1985, while 98 per cent of the age cohort (almost 100 per cent in the urban area) were in primary schools, just over 80 per cent of them would be admitted to various kinds of junior middle schools. Most unsuccessful candidates had to repeat grade six because their chance of getting a job was extremely low.

It should be noted, however, that primary schools in Harbin and teachers were beginning to play a greater role in evaluating their pupils, although external evaluation was still dominant. For example, a headmistress was more than happy to tell me that only recently they had succeeded in convincing the municipal bureau of education that the school did not need to participate in the second-round junior middle school entrance examination because of the stable but outstanding examination results of its pupils in the past. Instead, 30 per cent of its graduates could enter the key-point junior middle school without any examination every year. The headmistress said,

> That (her pupils being exempt from the examination) will be helpful because we want to carry out more "second-classroom" (extra-curricular) learning

> activities. The examination ties our teachers to the traditional methods of teaching that was no good for the educational reform.

Furthermore, the school began to use extra-curricular activities as a part of academic evaluation in the school.

What was attempted above was to indicate, on the basis of the collected information about the primary schools in Harbin, what stage of development in the Beeby model they had reached. Such characteristics as were identified indicate that the stage of development which the schools I visited had reached fell between Stages II and III in the Beeby model. For example, it was noted that primary education in Harbin was a formal and well organized system. Discipline, however, was tight, and government officials rather than teachers themselves were the centre of authority and source of new educational ideas. The school syllabus was totally determined by the government. Coupled with the pressure of the final leaving examination at grade 6, the syllabus largely limited the meaning of symbols taught in the class to the textbook. On the other hand, nature knowledge and social studies were not thought to be as important as language and mathematics which were the core subjects in examinations. Furthermore, the teaching strategies seen in these primary schools were not sufficient to cater for the emotional and creative life of children there. In a word, primary schools in Harbin seem to be at a stage of development under which the pupil "confronts a

learning environment that is more structured and requires that he or she adapt to its requirements" (Weber, 1979: 134).

It should, however, also be noticed that there were progressive improvements too. For example, more enlightened teaching methods and extra-curricular activities were being tried out. In addition, teachers began to recognize the importance of the individual needs of pupils. Now we should have a direct understanding of the quality of primary teachers in Harbin.

6.2 The Qualitative Aspects of the Normal School

One important issue of this research was to understand the quality of primary teachers in Harbin through understanding the development of the normal school. Viewed from the Beeby model, the general quality of primary teachers in Harbin was low. The reason lay in the qualitative aspect of the program of primary teacher training in the city. First of all, the qualifications of the teacher educators in the normal school were limited, with the highest being holders of bachelor degrees. The kind of intellectual training they had made them retreat to the textbook when teaching normal school students. That was why in most classes observed in the normal school, no matter whether they were Chinese language, politics, history, or psychology, reading-the-text was the most common style of teaching. More often than not, the teacher read or summarized the text for the class.

Genuine discussion, dialogue, and discovery of meaning by students were rare and superficial. In some cases, errors reflecting the teacher's poor academic preparation were found. For example, in a Chinese language class, the teacher could not correct a student's answer which said Marco Polo lived in the 18th century. In a Chinese language lesson with a topic on "dreams", the teacher used up the time of two periods to narrate the text. When asked (by me during the interview) if he had heard of Freud. His answer was yes. When further asked if he knew anything about the father of psycho-analysis, whose interpretation of dreams had become like folk stories to high school students in the west, he could not answer.

The low quality of primary teachers was also a result of the low academic background of those selected for training as teachers. Since its establishment, the normal school had recruited junior middle school graduates for training. As a result, the program of training in the normal school concentrated on strengthening their basic knowledge. Furthermore, the idea of educating normal school students with a standard set of normal school textbooks reflected the "thinness" of the program of primary teacher education.

To conclude, by looking at the qualitative aspects of the primary education and the normal school in Harbin, it was obvious that primary teachers there were not well educated and trained. As a result, primary teaching there tended to be teacher-centered, and rote-memorization was

dominant in learning. But it should also be noted that the tendency of shifting to more enlightened methods of teaching began to develop recently. This is why it is being asserted here that schools in Harbin are moving from Stage II to Stage III in the Beeby model. An interesting question is "From where did the momentum of change originate?"

6.3 Is the Teacher a Key Factor of Educational Development?

The Beeby model postulates that the teacher is a key factor influencing the qualitative development of primary education which is an immediate result of an improvement in the quality of teacher training. As Beeby contends, the higher the general and professional training of the teacher the more confident and capable she is to promote such development. In the case of Harbin, the above propositions seems to have been validated. In the 17 years from 1949 to the outbreak of the Cultural Revolution in 1966, Harbin had been able to develop, from a humble starting point, a primary education system comprehensive enough to enroll over 90% of the primary school age children in the city. Given the poor physical condition of the school, the lack of formally trained teachers and the influence of the traditional conception of education, primary education has stuck to the spoon-fed style of schooling. In other words, the learners were pre-dominantly drilled to memorize the text directly or through question-and-answer.

By 1985, the material condition of primary education was slightly improved compared to its extremely poor former condition, but the financial support of education was still meagre: the classroom environment crowded, laboratory equipment limited, if not non-existent, and there were only a few facilities for cultivating hobbies, etc. There was, however, a tendency among teachers to begin to try out the currently promoted teaching methods which aimed at changing the rote-memorization method on the one hand, and encouraging pupils to participate more actively in the learning process on the other.

Given all these structural constraints on the open/progressive approach to learning and teaching, where did the momentum of change come? It seemed to have come largely from, as Beeby postulates, the confidence of the teachers which, in turn, was a result of their longer academic and professional training. It is highly doubtful whether the rudimentary form of the learner-centred approach to education emerging recently would have been able to develop given the large proportion of untrained teachers before the 1960s.

The educational level and professional training of primary teachers in Harbin today were humble compared to their counterparts in developed countries, but they were a step ahead of their predecessors. As found out in this research, the proportion of untrained teachers in the primary school was formidable before 1977. In 1985, the

number of untrained teachers was kept to a minimum, especially in the city schools. That was why only until recently the trend towards using the more enlightened teaching methods began to develop. The following is a comparison of the situation before and after 1980 which shows that the elimination of untrained primary teachers in Harbin was a slow and complicated process.

Despite the special status of the two key-point primary schools I visited, the schools had continued to hire untrained teachers until 1980. For example, in one school, with 57 teachers there were 12 who had no pre-service training. Among the 45 teachers who had pre-service training some joined this school after 1980. In other words, although the new system of primary teacher education in Harbin started to develop not later than 1947, privileged primary schools like these two had still not reached a stage of development by 1985 where they could be staffed exclusively by teachers with pre-service training.

Opportunities for further studies by untrained in-service teachers expanded tremendously after 1977; part-time and full-time courses were offered by the normal school and the municipal department of education. There was also the correspondence school. Untrained teachers in these two key-point primary schools were also registered in different courses of training. A teacher, whom had been quoted previously, told me her case.

I replaced my mom (as a teacher) in 1979, but I

> took a study leave and enrolled myself in a full-time program of teacher training in 1981. Actually, I didn't want to because, you know, I hadn't been a student for long time. Also I wouldn't receive any salary because I wasn't a qualified teacher yet. The leadership of our school indicated to me that I should do it. Life at that time, for me, was really hard. We could only live on my husband's income. Otherwise, I would have had to work as a caretaker in this school. So I got to do it. Luckily, I came around.[22]

At the same time, it had become abundantly clear that the present system of teacher training had shifted far away from Mao's idea of education for political correctness. It was cultural and scientific knowledge that was regarded by the present leadership as functionally most important to the development in China. She continued,

> In the training school, we learnt cultural subjects. Lots of time were for learning the Chinese language, geography and history. My specialty was geography and history. We also learnt educational psychology and pedagogy. The curriculum was almost the same as the three-year normal school, except that we didn't need teaching practice because we were teachers already.
>
> There were many young students in my class. Many of

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[22]The replacement policy in employment will be discussed in detail in the next section.

them were 10 to 15 years younger than me. Like me, they had substituted their parents as teachers.

She was a victim of the Cultural Revolution because she only became a qualified teacher 17 years after she left school. Another item of my field notes reported another teacher's experience which mirrored the slow process of upgrading the qualifications of the teachers in Harbin.

> I finished lower middle school in 1957. I really wanted to be a teacher because my father was a headmaster of a primary school. Although I hadn't studied at the normal school, I was able to find a job in this school. At that time, there was always flexibility in the academic qualifications of teachers, and my father knew the leadership here.
>
> I started taking part-time courses to improve myself in the job from 1958 to 1963. I learnt something there but the courses didn't lead me towards any additional qualification. After the Cultural Revoltion, I registered myself in part-time study again for three years. Then, in 1982, on the advice of the headmistress, I entered the Institute for Teachers of Further Study and studied for one year. Finally I became a certified teacher. I met the state's requirement and could stay to teach at this school (Field notes).

To sum up, despite the unsatisfactory quality of primary teachers in Harbin, the fact was that the number of

untrained teachers had been rapidly decreasing in the last few years and the program of pre-service training of teachers which was being extended was bringing about some changes on the scene of primary education. Teachers' enthusiasm over the use of audio-visual materials and other non-rote memorization methods, though still not very successfully adopted as yet, was a beginning sign of a new approach to education. But, inspite of the vehement support of the political leaders, this new trend would not likely have developed without the recent improvement in the qualifications of teachers. More substantial changes to a relatively more enlightened approach to education are in the offing and these will likely be reinforced by other social and economic factors.

6.4 Other Important Socio-cultural Factors Affecting the Quality of Primary Teachers in Harbin

Besides the unsatisfactory standard of the normal school, the problem of quality of primary teachers was also a result of an unusual employment policy in the society -- the replacement policy. Actually, the replacement system in employment was not confined to education. It was, and to a certain extent still is, a job-allocation method used in China. It greatly aggravated the low quality of the primary teachers in the country.

To explain: owing to the limited job opportunities for the urban dwellers the replacement system guaranteed that

there would be a job in the city for one's child if the parent was to retire. In other words, by the time the father or mother retired, if the son or daughter still had not gotten a job somewhere else, the organization for which the parent worked, be it a bank, a restaurant, or a school, had to provide a job for the child of the retiring parent. As far as the primary schools before 1980 were concerned, the child would replace his parent as a teacher if the child could meet the minimum requirement -- being a primary school graduate.[23] Otherwise, the child would work as a laborer in the school. As a result, many teenagers entered teaching with low qualifications, often without pre-service training. A primary teacher interviewed related her experiences.

> I became a primary school teacher in 1979 though I could have entered the teachers' university in 1967 if there were not the Cultural Revolution. As a result of the new policy during the Cultural Revolution, I was assigned to work and settle down in a village near the Sino-Soviet border (in Heilongjiang). There I taught middle school because of the extreme scarcity of qualified teachers in the rural area.
>
> In 1979, the government revoked the policy and arranged for teenagers sent down (to the village) to return to the city. I came back to Harbin and

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[23]In the key-point school, the requirement was usually higher. It required the child at least be a junior middle school graduate.

replaced my mom in this school. She was a teacher. She retired so that I could get her job.

According to a government spokesman, this replacement system in education was abolished in 1980. But it had affected, for decades, the academic quality of primary teachers in a city like Harbin.

Another important factor contributing to the unsatisfactory quality of primary teachers was that primary teaching was a low paying job. The starting salary of a teacher was 37.5 yuan per month in 1985. After a year's probation, it would be increased to 39 yuan. Usually, the increment was calculated in terms of years of working (0.5 yuan per year) and years of teaching (0.5 yuan per year). It means, if a teacher entered teaching right after graduation and continued in the job without a break, her salary would be 48 yuan after ten years, calculated on the present rate. If she was a classmistress, she will have an allowance of about ten yuan extra per month. If she were elected an outstanding teacher, a substantial bonus would be awarded that year. Of course, if she were promoted to "special grade teacher", her salary would have a great jump, but the honor of "special grade teacher" was limited to only a few in each city.

Compared to ordinary workers who had the same qualifications, teachers earned less because, under the new economic policy, workers would always have a bonus which equalled, if not exceeded, the orginal salary. Since 1949,

the salary of teachers had been one of the lowest in the country. Although it had been raised a few times since 1977, it was still lower in 1985 than that of an ordinary worker. For example, the headmistress of a primary school in Harbin told me that a teacher who had taught in her school for 20 years now earned 76 yuan a month, but one of the teacher's previous pupils who worked in a factory earned more than 100 yuan a month. As a teacher said,

> A worker's income is always flexible and higher, but the teacher's is fixed. That's why no young men like to teach. A male teacher has to face the problem of remaining single because it is difficult for a teacher to be alloted a residence unit. Who will marry you if you don't have a place to live?

In China, residences were allocated to employees. Big factories and enterprises or other profit-earning organizations could spare more funds for the construction of dormitories for their employees while it was almost impossible for a primary teacher to be alloted a housing unit from the school. Among the ten school personnel interviewed in Harbin, only two headmasters/headmistresses were allocated a housing unit from the municipal government.

Despite their low professional and economic status, the primary teachers in Harbin were a dedicated and enduring social group. As revealed in the interviews with people concerned with primary education, many teachers experienced poor health because they tended to overwork themselves. A

teacher said,

> I feel it is my obligation to teach my pupils well so that they can pass the junior middle school entrance examination. Their parents want them to be admitted into the key-point middle school. This is our wish too. Sometimes, I feel pressure, but it is our duty. We teachers must not let down pupils' parents.

As a result, teachers liked to give extra lessons to their classes. Another teacher told me that her grade six class should have eight compositions in one term. She finished them in the first three weeks. There were many examples of teachers keeping slow learners for supplementary exercise during recess. Moreover, classmistresses liked to conduct family visits. They went to pupils' homes to talk with their parents, trying to understand the social disadvantages working against the pupils' learning at school. If necessary, some teachers visited a pupil's parents a few times in one term.

In other words, teachers in Harbin were always ready to put as much spare time as necessary into after-school work related to their teaching. A teacher I interviewed said,

> After receiving the textbook from the school, I read through the whole book. I try to familiarize myself with the book, i.e. how are the chapters arranged? what relation is the first chapter with the rest in each section?

> If it is an excerpt, I will go beyond the text and the teacher's manual and find out where the excerpt is from and read through the original story. I believe this is the first step to fully prepare myself for the job.

Another in-service teacher also said,

> Although I have taught the same subject for a few years, every year I go through the text again and design a new lesson plan. Otherwise, my teaching is not up to date.

As the headmistress of a primary school I visited said,

> You can't expect one teacher to be as hard working and knowledgeable as the next. Generally speaking, more than half of the teachers in our school are responsible teachers who want to contribute as much as they can to the country's plan of the four modernizations.

Another important attribute of the primary teachers in Harbin was that they were <u>self-sacrificing</u>. A primary teacher told me that her husband was always teasing her that he would not marry a primary teacher again in his next life because she was preoccupied with her school work, and she upset him by not going out on Sundays. Her confession continued:

> Every day, after arriving home, it takes me about three hours to cook and eat and to finish other household chores. The rest of my evening is taken

> up by reading materials relating to lessons for the next day. Sometimes I prepare additional materials for the lesson. Sometimes I read journals which tell me how other language teachers in the country teach. I feel exhausted. At school, I have spoken a lot. So I am very impatient with my daughter whenever she comes up to me with a learning problem.

The teacher looked a bit regretful and bewildered when she was recounting this experience. It seemed that she could not understand herself why she was willing to take care of the moral and intellectual developments of 62 young boys and girls but would not spare a few minutes for her only daughter. This was strange but not totally unexplicable. She went on to say,

> She (her daughter) is also in grade 5. I am sorry for her but I can't disappoint the parents of my class who have placed upon me the responsibility to teach their kids.

Also primary teachers insisted that they should act as role models for the pupils. They should wear simple clothes, speak intelligently and be willing to lead a simple life.

The dedication shown by teachers in Harbin and their endurance of hardship were related to their political orientation. Many teachers and graduating normal school students interviewed tended to think that the country was now at a low level of economic development, but that it

needed thousands and thousands of technological personnel to fulfill the plan of the four modernizations. Primary education was the foundation of the technological training for such personnel. Therefore, many teachers regarded themselves as doing a job of cultivating talents, and thus, training qualified personnel for the four modernizations. Such a perception of the function of education by the teachers coincided with the government's conviction that primary education was crucial to the nation's economic development.

Another distinct characteristic concerning primary teachers in Harbin was that teaching tended to be a collective effort. Within the primary school, there was the practice that teachers of the same subject met one to two times every week to discuss how a subsequent chapter was to be taught. Every time, one teacher was responsible for outlining the lesson plan. Through discussion, new ideas and methods of teaching were brought up. In some schools where there were outstanding teachers, other teachers were briefed by them from time to time beside panel meetings.

Furthermore, Chinese teachers were seen in Harbin as legitimate surrogate parents of pupils. First of all, there was the classmistress system in the primary schools in Harbin. She was not only teaching but also taking care of the whole class for its intellectual, moral and physical development. Subsequently, although school started at eight in the morning, the classmistress always started working at

seven when her pupils also began to arrive. She read and commented on their diaries. She gave them advice and guidance concerning problems. Also she had to attend class meetings organized by students themselves. In these meetings, academic and non-academic problems of the class, and of individual pupils, were discussed. She also had to help organize social activities, and other learning activities for her class. From time to time, she joined her pupils to decorate the class bulletin board, and publish class journals, etc.

As a result, the classmistress always maintained an intimate relationship with her pupils. A teacher told me how she felt about the kind of relationship she had with her class. "My class is mine. What I say to them must be observed," she said confidently.

If this is not obvious, another incident about her and her class will illustrate it. She said that she had lost her temper twice that year. The first time was when her class was so enthusiastic in responding to the student-teacher's questions in class that many pupils left their seats to volunteer answers. This annoyed the student-teacher who feared that discipline would be a problem. In fact, the class was getting a bit boisterous. When she realized that the student-teacher was upset because of the "poor" discipline of her class, she was "mad" and scolded the class. According to this teacher, she wanted the class to leave a good impression with the practising teacher; so she

had reminded them beforehand that they must behave properly, but now the result was the opposite. "I was angry. They made themselves and me lose face," she said in a way like the Chinese parents who felt they had lost face because their child could not live up to their expectations.

The psychology of "lost face" is important in understanding the Chinese teacher. The other time this classmistress lost her temper was when two pupils of her class fought each other during a geography lesson. The geography teacher was so angry that she felt she had to tell the classmistress directly. Again this classmistress scolded her class, telling them that she felt insulted because of the behavior of the two boys.

The role of the surrogate parent relationship existed not only in primary schools but also in the normal school. An incident of a teacher-educator whom I interviewed is another good example.

> Three years ago, in a class of educational psychology, after teaching about age characteristics of teenagers, this teacher-educator referred to a boy student as an example. She said his behavior was not up to the expectation of his age. The student stood up and challenged her saying that she should not have used him as an example. She, feeling indignant as most teachers would in such a situation, did not feel that she should apologize but insisted that the reference was justified

> because it elaborated her teaching. The showdown continued though no further arguments were made. After being advised by his class association, the student aplogized to her the following day. She told him that it was not right to be rude in the class (Field notes).

This teacher-educator felt satisfied because the student apologized. Like a Chinese parent, even though one punished a child wrongly, it was believed to be reasonable that a child should bear it without challenge.

Anthropologists Hsu and Chu's(1979:402) findings help us understand this kind of student-teacher relationship. As they pointed out,

> Hierarchy was a fact of life in traditional Chinese society. Those in authority did not have to apologize for exercising their authority and those in lower positions felt no embarrassment in complying with it. What, then, is the situation today? China under communism is not an egalitarian society, ...

One last important characteristic concerning primary teachers was that acceptance of jobs by young teachers was facilitated by an overtly dominating political system and traditional practices of education.

Normally speaking, new primary school teachers in Harbin were youngsters about 19. At 15, they were graduated from the junior middle school, and decided, for whatever

reason, to become teachers. After studying four years (before 1984, it was three years) at the normal school, they became qualified primary school teachers.

Here arises a crucial question: Since they decided to become teachers at a relatively "immature" stage of life, did they later quit rather easily? In other words, did Harbin experience severe loss of trained teachers. The answer was no because of the particular politico-economic factors and the satisfaction which teachers experienced in their jobs.

From observation and information obtained from those schools visited, few primary teachers in Harbin changed their job. The reasons were manifold. First, employment in China was planned and regulated by the government. As far as Harbin was concerned, all normal school graduates were assigned to teach in primary schools. These prospective teachers had no choice over which school they would like to teach in; all was decided by the government. They were assigned to schools where vacancies were available. Generally, graduates with outstanding academic achievements went to key-point schools.

Secondly, any change of job was also decided by the government. As a policy, it was set up that all normal school graduates must teach at least three years before they could have new jobs. In practice, the change of job had to be approved by the government because no organization could employ an individual without the letter of release from the

original organization. In the city, small private businesses like repair services, and goods sellers, etc., had to be licensed by the government and it would be impossible for an in-service teacher to be licensed to become a serviceman, a peddler, or a grocer.

Thirdly, primary school children were usually well-disciplined and did not give many problems to the young and inexperienced teachers. The culture of school inhibited children and restrained their possible unsociable actions. Traditionally, the teacher in China had absolute authority over the pupils whose rights would never be upheld even if they were punished unjustifiably. Further, parents were always on the teacher's side in terms of punishing children. It was a Chinese saying that "to teach without discipline means the teacher is lazy." Parents tended to be convinced that it was an important yardstick in discriminating a good teacher from a bad teacher. Therefore, a hard-working teacher had almost no limit in enforcing discipline and order in the classroom.

The Chinese government abolished corporal punishment of children, but the teacher's authority over pupils was still maintained. It was not difficult to notice that tight discipline and order which recognized the authority of the teacher was still a priority in the school.

On the other hand, to start teaching when one was young seemed like an advantage in retaining trained teachers in the profession because they were sympathetic to children.

There has been little research done on the psychological problems of beginning primary teachers in Harbin or China, but it was interesting to know that all normal school students interviewed (formally and informally) for this research (totalling about 20) showed great interest in working with children. One normal school student said,

> I find that I have changed after entering the normal school. Before, I was a hot-tempered person. I didn't and wouldn't listen to others. But after going to the primary school to observe teaching, I have found that to be a primary school teacher, you must be patient. Otherwise, you won't do the job well because primary school children are small kids. To make them understand, you have to repeat and repeat yourself. During the period of extra-curricular activity, I played with them. Not only have I enjoyed my practicum but I have also learnt to be patient. I think I will like to be a teacher.

Another student said,

> When I was in the primary school for the practicum, I felt excited. I have never been with so many children at one time. They were lovely. To be with them was the most wonderful thing. I am happy because I know I can go back there soon.

To sum up, the type of traditional authority of the teacher, the teacher's sense of responsibility to the pupils

and that of dedication to education and the country, helped promote a sense of accomplishment which, as pointed out by Lortie (1975: 174-175), reinforced the teacher's allegiance to her job. All this affected the mode of teacher-pupil interaction on the one hand, helped generate support of the system of teacher education from the teachers themselves on the other.

7. Summary and Conclusion

7.1 Summary

Primary teacher education in Harbin has undergone a slow process of development. In 1947, the Harbin Normal School was set up. By 1952, a three-year program of training was instituted, and candidates for training had to be junior middle school graduates. The socio-economic system at that time enabled the Normal School to enroll some committed students for training. The qualifications of the teachers in the Normal School, on the other hand, were varied. Because of the acute shortage of university graduates in the community, many normal school teachers at that time were diploma-holders and a few of them were alumni of the Normal School itself. Regarding the program of training, the normal school put much emphasis on "feeding" prospective primary teachers with background knowledge of the cultural subjects and political education. Professional knowledge was almost neglected.

This program of primary teacher training in the normal school reflected the form of primary schooling at that time. Since the education system was set to function again when a new form of communist government was established in China in 1949, education was substantially filled with explicit political teaching. To orient the prospective primary teachers to an intensive study of the basic tenets of communism and the new Chinese system of government was

educationally important; it eventually aimed at directing primary teachers as well as their pupils to integrate smoothly into the new political culture in formation.

This system of primary teacher education continued with little change and expansion until 1966 although more primary schools were opened during this period. Unfortunately, it came to a halt during the Cultural Revolution. The program of primary teacher training in the normal school did not resume normalcy until 1976. In other words, no primary teachers were trained for 10 years because after 1968 middle school education expanded far more rapidly than Harbin could afford, and subsequently, all scanty resources were directed to the training of middle school teachers.

In 1978, with a group of technologically oriented communist leaders in power, the Chinese government launched the plan of the four modernizations. In order to improve the contribution of education to the country's development, the modernization plan has necessitated a comprehensive reform of education. Regarding primary teacher education, its quality has become a concern of the present government which has taken measures to upgrade it. The situation in a city like Harbin is a case in point. First of all, the replacement system, which was responsible for the accumulation of untrained teachers has been abolished. Also, all untrained primary teachers in the city are required to improve their qualification through further studies or to leave the job.

As regards changes within the Harbin Normal School, they are limited but significant. First, more funds have been provided by the government to improve the physical conditions of the school. As a result, a new building has been put up and foreign funds have been solicited for the installation of up-to-date teaching facilities. Secondly, the program of training has been extended to four years. In the present curriculum, the amount of political education is greatly reduced. Instead, more emphasis is laid on cultural studies. Thirdly, the government has also made efforts to recruit better qualified teachers for the normal school. Today, the norm is that teacher educators in the normal school should have a university degree.

All this tends to lead to the conclusion that the Chinese government, or that in the Province of Heilongjiang of which Harbin is the capital city, has taken considerable steps to actualize its commitment to improve primary teacher education. This is a result of the conception that teacher education is a pivotal hinge between educational development and the plan of modernization.

Yet, a few issues have to be addressed and pertinent problems solved before a higher stage of development in primary teacher education can be attained. First of all, the low quality of primary teachers is a result of the low academic entrance requirement for prospective teachers. They are junior middle school graduates before entering for training. The four years' training in the normal school

concentrates on strengthening their basic knowledge with the result that their professional education is scant. With regard to the curriculum, its organization confines students' scope of study to the textbook. As a result, despite the government's call for using new teaching methods, only few new primary teachers whose teaching I have observed tend to be confident enough to try out new methods.

Secondly, the quality of the teacher educators is another problem. Their lack of professional training at university and the rote-memorization style of learning they have experienced from primary school onwards make them unresponsive to the call for learner-centred education. As a result, reading from textbooks is still the mostly used teaching method in the normal school. Many teachers in the normal school use the textbook in the way that they ask students to read, underline the key words and sentences. They seem to believe these are the most efficient methods of teaching. At the same time, the poorly equipped normal school certainly is not conducive to the trial of new teaching methods.

To orient primary teachers to the creative methods of teaching, the academic qualifications of teacher educators and prospective teachers have to be elevated so that the nature of the training program in the normal school will change from "facts-feeding" to a more professional orientation. On the other hand, given the present low level of academic background of the prospective teachers it is

therefore necessary to direct most efforts to cultural studies, i.e., more class hours and efforts be directed to the study of subjects like Chinese language, mathematics, and history. But the part of professional education in the program of training should be better organized and expanded so that teachers trained would be more innovative and confident enough to meet the state's recent call for using enlightened and communicative methodologies.

Thirdly, despite the government's effort to promote the society's perception of the teacher, primary teaching has remained the least attractive job for most urban youths because of low income. As a result, graduates of better academic standing from the junior middle schools in the city are reluctant to apply for the normal school. The government attributes this phenomenon to the "politics takes command" policy advocated during the Cultural Revolution when intellectuals (including teachers) were called "the stinking no. 9" (which means the lowest social group in terms of political status) who became highly vulnerable targets in the mass political campaigns. While this was true, the problem of low income has replaced this political problem to become the greatest obstacle in attracting the better educated teenagers to apply for teacher training. To develop primary teacher education, the government should proceed to elevate the socio-economic status of primary teachers.

Despite their low academic qualifications, primary teachers in Harbin have other important qualities which are

crucial to the development of a teaching body who are not as professionally sophisticated as their western counterparts but dedicated and quite competent in the job. Primary teachers, as found out in Harbin, are self-sacrificing and enduring. They liken themselves to a milkcow, a candle, a gardener, or something that means to sacrifice oneself for the well being of the younger generation. That is why teachers in China have never staged a strike despite the hardships they have suffered over the past 36 years. Today they are still patiently waiting for the government to improve their lot. The qualities of being patriotic and self-sacrificing which help China maintain a moderate level of educational development are two great assets of teachers on which the Chinese government is or could be capitalizing for her plan of national development.

To end the summary, it should be pointed out again that the Beeby model has been useful in this research because it provides a good "bench mark" for understanding the educational development in a developing country like China (or Harbin in particular). The model indicates to us that primary education in Harbin is in between Stages II and III, meaning that it is still far from the stage of meaning although improvements have been made in the last few years. The model contributes to the identification of elements which could be incorporated into the Chinese system if a higher stage of development in primary education is to be reached. According to the Beeby model, when the situation

allows, it will be necessary to further extend the period of general education and training of primary teachers so that they will be more competent to implement the more enlightened teaching methods. Interestingly enough, it is also the projection of the Chinese government today that the country will, for the first time, have university graduates teaching primary schools in year 2000 (*People's Daily*, Overseas edition, December 5, 1985).

With regard to the relationship between the quality of primary teachers and educational development, the teacher seems to be, as Beeby asserts, a key factor promoting a higher level of educational development. Looking at the case of Harbin, the tendency to shift towards a more enlightened approach to education in the city is a direct result of the improved qualifications of the primary techers as a whole although the economic reforms in the country are also a driving force.

7.2 Conclusion

In light of the findings in this research, it is time to discuss a few important issues related to teacher education. First of all, the particular political and cultural systems of a society have great influence on the development of its education as well as teacher education. As Lynch and Plunkett(1973:51) have observed,

> Teacher education not only functions to produce teachers but, as a set of processes and

> institutions, reflects a mass of cultural and structural features both of the educational system to which it is most immediately linked and of the wider society and economy to which it owes its existence.

As regards political education in the program of teacher education in Harbin, perhaps, some people would dismiss political values in teacher education as indoctrination of teachers who will preach rather than teach. Such a suspicion is difficult to justify as far as teachers' contribution to national development is concerned. Moreover, it is as necessary as air to life. As Floud(1963:382) has found out, "The teacher-missionary is a familar figure in every modern society, gentling the masses, spreading the gospel of citizenship, making the nation, in fact". In the case of Harbin, a reasonable amount of political education of teachers results in their dedication to their job and the country.

Secondly, what is the appropriate qualification of the prospective teachers in a society? In the western system of teacher education, it has been emphasized that prospective teachers should be equipped with two kinds of conceptual knowledge, that is the subject knowledge and professional knowledge concerning all kinds of theories of teaching, while teaching practice is to provide them a chance to acquire through their own interactions with the school environment the kind of particular experience that is

believed to be important in teaching. As a result, in developed countries, "Educators," as Davies and Zaret(1984:22) correctly noted, "have used the granting of a bachelor's degree as the decision point for including or excluding candidates from the teaching profession". The basic assumption is that with a university education, teachers should be knowledgeable enough to deal with teaching problems effectively. In a developing country like China, this is not yet possible due to the low level of educational development. Yet, some kind of criterion has to be set up and it must be practical enough to ensure that the schools are staffed by the most competent teachers that society can afford to have. The efforts made and the problems faced with improving teacher education in Harbin should be helpful to educational planners in developing countries not only in identifying the difficulties and problems which can arise in the area but also in defining the nature and content of teacher education programs.

Obviously, teacher education does not exist by itself; it depends on the country's level of educational development for the academic quality of teachers and students. In other words, to plan for development of teacher education in a developing country, its level of educational development should be taken into consideration because it indicates what improvements can be effected immediately and what would need a longer time span to achieve.

By the same token, when the academic qualifications of the prospective teachers are identified, it is possible to design the appropriate kind of curriculum for teacher education. The relative emphasis that should be placed on academic studies -- so that the prospective teachers will have a broader base of subject knowledge -- as against professional studies will also depend on the level of the entry qualification of the prospective teachers. On the other hand, educational administrators would only be able to raise the entry qualification of the prospective teachers when the level of educational development is rising. Generally speaking, the higher a society's level of educational development, the more sophisticated is its program of teacher education.

In a word, the nature and the content of programs of teacher education should reflect the education system for which the teachers are trained and the entry qualification of the prospective teachers. The program must not be too simple or too complicated for prospective teachers because in either case educational development in the long run would be retarded.

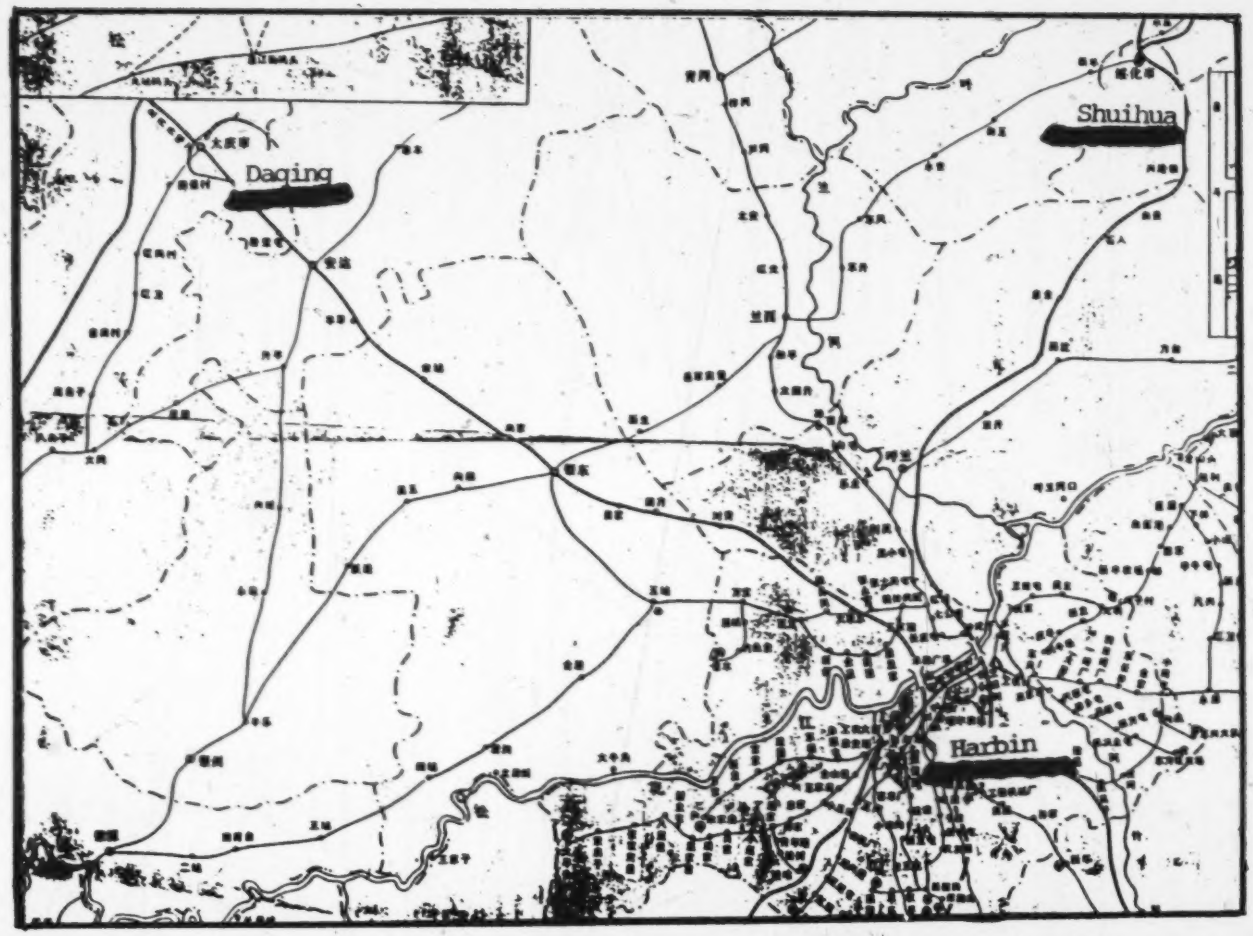
Thirdly, it is truism that teacher education is meaningless if it does not strive for better professional and academic education of the prospective teachers. Consequently, the assumption in the Beeby model that the teacher is a key agent of educational development, can still be of value to the Third World as far as aspirations of

educational development are concerned. Yet, a single-minded pursuit of higher levels of teacher competence will not succeed or be practicable if the development of teacher education is not based on the socio-political, cultural and educational developments of the society, and the efforts futile if programs of teacher education are not geared to the particular types of needs for national development. Therefore, if improvements in teacher qualifications and teacher education programs are not based on practical situations they cannot be regarded as likely to be effective.

Finally, the idea, also put forward by Beeby, that as educational development takes place instructional strategies must become more democratic, thus allowing the learner to be more self-directed rather than authority-directed is important not only for Chinese but all other societies. Modern science and democracy have been two imported institutions which have presented themselves as two big challenges to the Chinese society since the late Qing Dynasty. A full-fledged development of these two institutions in modern China remains to be cultivated and would increasingly have their effect both on classroom teaching and the preparation of teachers. In other words, today's economic reforms through improving the quality of schooling and teaching are two conducive factors to the development of science and democracy which, in turn, will further reinforce economic and educational development in the country. To what extent the educational reform in China

today (which is based on such positive values in western educational systems as self-initiative of pupils, scientific knowledge, individuality, etc.) will cause social and political disruptions in the country is another interesting research topic. The only thing that can be said here is: Developments in modern western societies indicates that the more open a society's educational system, the more the government is challenged, but the more creative and productive are the people.

Appendix A



The locations of the three cities visited in Heilongjiang Province

Appendix B

General Information About Primary Teachers in China

Age: Sex: Salary:

Position: Primary teacher/ Normal school student/ Normal school teacher (delete the inapplicable)

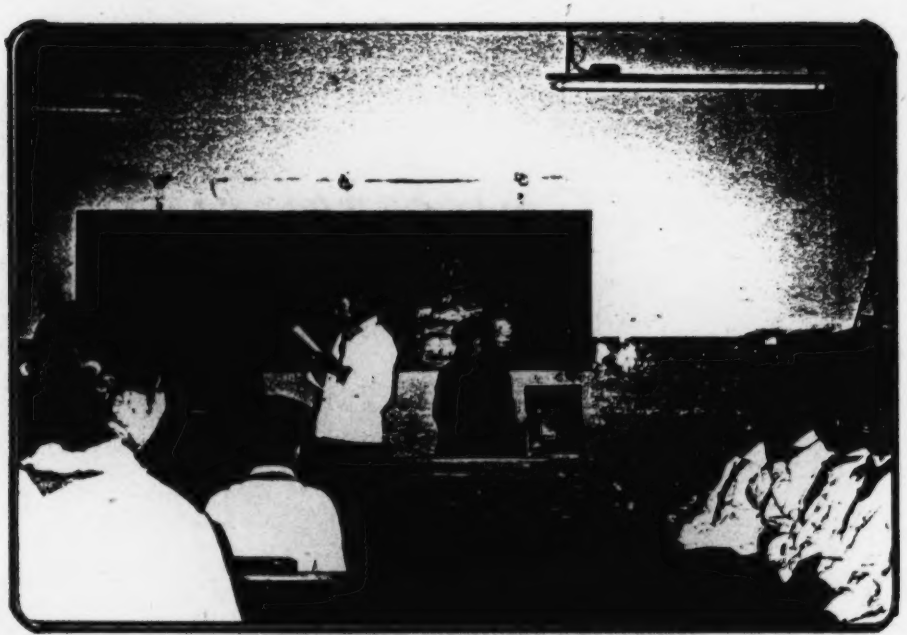
1. How many subjects do you teach?
2. How many class hours do you undertake every week?
3. Are you responsible for student-conselling after school? If yes, how many hours every week?
4. Do you have a second job?
5. Have you had formal teacher training? (If no, turn to Q.7)
6. a. What kind of teacher training did you receive? How many years?
   b. When did you graduate?
7. What is your academic qualification besides teacher training:
   a. University graduate
   b. Complete middle school graduate
   c. Junior middle school graduate
   d. Vocational middle school graduate
   e. Primary school graduate
   f. Other (specifiy)____
8. How often do you read education journals?
   Very often____ Sometimes____ Seldom____ Never____
   Chinese____ English____
9. What is your biggest problem of work?
10. If possible, what reforms would you like to see introduced in your school?
11. Are you satisified with your job? Why?

Appendix C

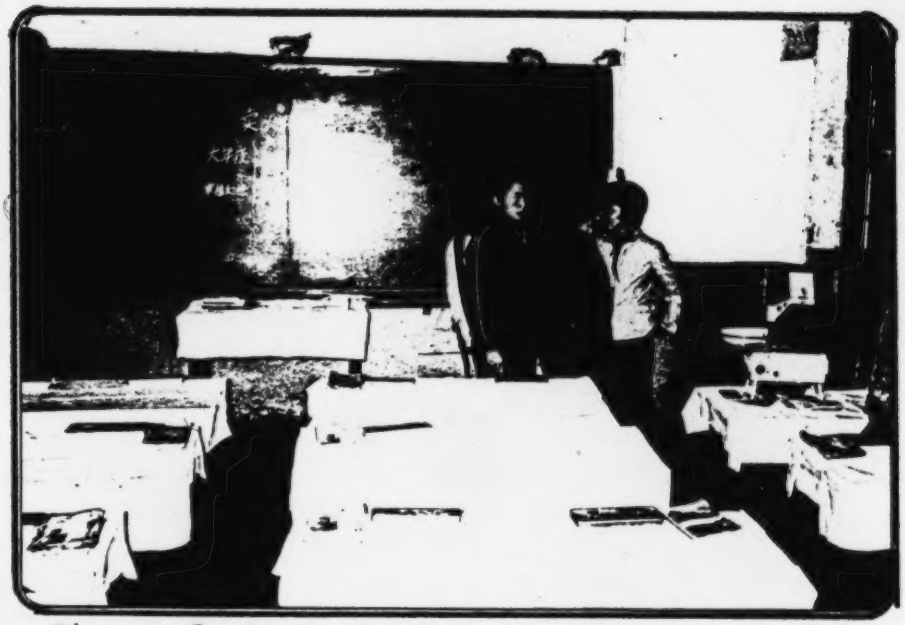
Picture 1: A Primary School Visited in Harbin

Picture 2: Another Primary School Visited in Harbin

Picture 3: A Primary Class

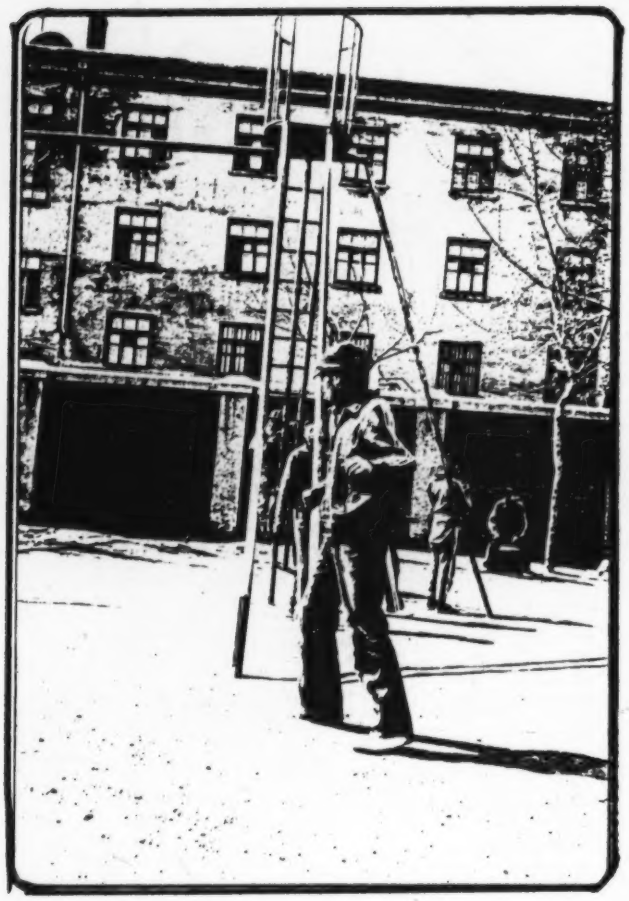


Picture 4: Another Primary Class



Picture 5: An Overhead Projector and the Screen

Picture 6: The Playground of a Primary School



Picture 7: A Slide

Picture 8: Some Exercise Equipment

Picture 9: The Laboratory in a Primary School

Picture 10: An Exercise to Relax the Eyes

Picture 11: A Fine Art Lesson

Picture 12: The Fine Art Teacher

Picture 13: A Primary Class Meeting

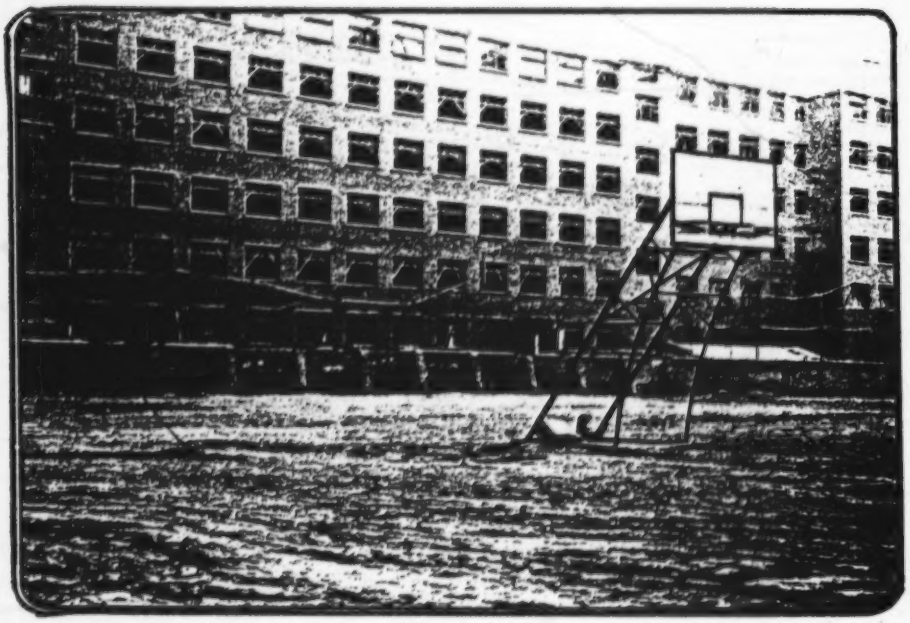
Picture 14: A Student-teacher Conducting a Class Meeting

Picture 15: The Harbin Normal School

Picture 16: A Class in the Normal School

Picture 17: The Biology Laboratory in the Normal School

Picture 18: A Biology Lesson in the Normal School



Picture 19: The New Building for Harbin Normal School

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